

# THEISTIC ARGUMENTS

## TRADITIONAL

- I. COSMOLOGICAL
- II. ONTOLOGICAL
- III. DESIGN
- IV. MORAL
- V. EXPERIENTIAL
- VI. MIRACLES
- VII. PRAGMATIC

## NONTRADITIONAL

- VIII. METAPHYSICAL
- IX. NOMOLOGICAL
- X. AXIOLOGICAL
- XI. NOOLOGICAL
- XII. LINGUISTIC
- XIII. ANTHROPOLOGICAL
- XIV. META-ARGUMENTS

# THE DIXIE ARGUMENT

- 1) Either my cat is named Lucifer or God exists.
- 2) My cat is not named Lucifer.
- 3) So, God exists.

# **COSMOLOGICAL ARGUMENTS**

# **AQUINAS'S FIRST WAY: UNMOVED MOVER**

- 1) Some things are moved.**
- 2) Whatever is moved is moved by another.**
- 3) There cannot be an infinite series of movers.**
- 4) So, there must be an unmoved mover (God).**

# ON VICIOUS REGRESSES

- **Patterson Brown, "Infinite Causal Regression,"** in Kenny (ed.), *Aquinas: A Collection of Critical Essays* (Notre Dame, 1976), pp. 214-236.
- **Caleb Cohoe, "There Must be a First: Why Thomas Aquinas Rejects Infinite, Essentially Ordered, Causal Series,"** *British Journal for the History of Philosophy* 21/5 (2013), pp. 838-856.

# **AQUINAS'S SECOND WAY: UNCAUSED CAUSE**

- 1) Some things are caused.
- 2) Whatever is caused is caused by another.
- 3) There cannot be an infinite series of causes.
- 4) So, there must be an uncaused cause (God).

# **AQUINAS'S THIRD WAY: NECESSARY BEING**

- 1) Whatever is contingent at one time did not exist.
- 2) If everything is contingent, then at one time nothing existed.
- 3) If at one time nothing existed, then nothing would exist now.
- 4) Something does exist now.
- 5) So, not every being is contingent.
- 6) So, there is a necessary being.
- 7) Either the necessary being gets its necessity from another, or exists necessarily of itself.
- 8) There cannot be an infinite regress of necessary beings that get their necessity from another.
- 9) So, there is a necessary being that exists necessarily of itself.

# AQUINAS'S THIRD WAY: NECESSARY BEING

- Edward Feser, *Aquinas* (Oneworld, 2009).



# **SAMUEL CLARKE-ISH CA**

- 1) There are dependent beings.**
- 2) For any dependent being, it either depends on itself, or it depends on another.**
- 3) Nothing can depend on itself.**
- 4) So, all dependent beings depend on another. (1, 2)**
- 5) The series of beings which depend on another can't be infinite.**
- 6) If the series of beings which depend on another can't be infinite, then the series of beings which depend on another must ultimately depend on an independent being.**
- 7) The series of beings which depend on another must ultimately depend on an independent being. (5, 6)**

# SAMUEL CLARKE-ISH CA

- Clarke, *A Demonstration of the Being and Attributes of God*.
- William Rowe, *The Cosmological Argument* (Princeton, 1975)
- Richard Gale, *On the Nature and Existence of God* (Cambridge, 1991), pp. 244ff.
- Bruce Reichenbach, *The Cosmological argument: A Reassessment* (Charles C. Thomas, 1972).

# LEIBNIZ'S CA

- 1) Anything that exists has a sufficient reason for why it exists, either in another contingent being or in a necessary being.
- 2) The world exists.
- 3) Therefore, the world has a sufficient reason for why it exists, either in another contingent being or in a necessary being.
- 4) But the sufficient reason for why the world exists cannot be in another contingent being, since (a) the world just is the collection of all contingent beings, and (b) the sufficient reason for the collection cannot be in its parts, individually or collectively.
- 5) So, a sufficient reason for the world must be in a necessary being outside the world.
- 6) Therefore, there is a necessary being outside the world

# LEIBNIZIAN CA: DAVIS-CRAIG

- 1) Everything that exists has an explanation.
- 2) The universe exists.
- 3) So, the universe has an explanation.
- 4) If the universe has an explanation its explanation is God.
- 5) So, God exists.

# LEIBNIZIAN CA: DAVIS-CRAIG

- Stephen T. Davis, "The Cosmological Argument and the Epistemic Status of Belief in God," *Philosophia Christi* 1/1 (1999), 5-16.
- William Lane Craig, *Reasonable Faith* (Crossway, 2008), pp. 106-111.

# LEIBNIZIAN CA: PRUSS

- 1) Every contingent fact has an explanation.
- 2) There is a contingent fact that includes all other contingent facts.
- 3) Therefore, there is an explanation of this fact.
- 4) This explanation cannot itself be a contingent fact.
- 5) So, the explanation of all contingent facts is necessary.

# LEIBNIZIAN CA: PRUSS

- Alexander Pruss, “The Leibnizian Cosmological Argument,” in Craig and Moreland (eds.), *The Blackwell Companion to Natural Theology* (Blackwell, 2009), ch. 2.

# GALE-PRUSS CA

- 1) For any proposition  $p$ , if  $p$  is true, then possibly, there is a proposition  $q$  that explains  $p$ .
- 2) All the contingently true propositions in the actual world form a big conjunctive proposition, BCCP.
- 3) Possibly, there is a proposition  $q$  that explains BCCP. (1, 2)
- 4)  $q$  explains BCCP only if  $q$  involves a necessary being.
- 5) There is a proposition  $q$  that explains BCCP that involves a necessary being. (3, 4,  $\vdash$  S5)
- 6)  $q$  explains BCCP only if  $q$  reports a personal explanation.
- 7) So, there is a proposition  $q$  that explains BCCP that involves a necessary being and reports a personal explanation. (5, 6)



# GALE-PRUSS CA

- Richard Gale and Alexander Pruss, "A New Cosmological Argument," *Religious Studies* 35/4 (1999), pp. 461-476.

# CA WITHOUT THE PSR

**PPE:** Given that (i) there is a possible explanation of the fact that F and (ii) any possible explanation of the fact that F entails P, it is reasonable to believe P.

- 1) The proposition that there is a unique necessary being who brought about the existence of everything other than itself by willing that the other beings should exist, would, if true, explain why there are contingent beings.
- 2) There is a possible explanation of the fact that there are contingent beings.
- 3) There is no proposition consistent with the claim that there are only contingent being which, if true, would explain why there are contingent beings.
- 4) Any possible explanation of the fact that there are contingent beings entails that there is a necessary being.
- 5) So, it is reasonable to believe that there is a necessary being.

# CA WITHOUT THE PSR

- **Bernard Katz and Elmar Kremer, "The Cosmological Argument Without the Principle of Sufficient Reason," *Faith and Philosophy* 14/1 (1997), pp. 62-70.**

# KOON'S CA

## Mereological Axioms

- A1.  $x$  is a part of  $y$  IFF anything that overlaps  $x$  overlaps  $y$ .
- A2. If there is a thing of type  $C$ , then there is an aggregate or sum or all such types.
- A3.  $x = y$  IFF  $x$  is a part of  $y$  and  $y$  is a part of  $x$ .
- A4. If a whole exists, so do all of its parts.
- A5. If all of the parts of a whole exist, so does the whole.

## Definition

- D. A wholly contingent thing is something that has no necessary parts.

# KOON'S CA

## Principles of Causation

- C1. Only actual existent things can be causes or effects.
- C2. A cause and its effect must be distinct (i.e., a cause can't overlap its effect).
- C3. Every wholly contingent thing has a cause.

# KOON'S CA

- L1. All parts of a necessary thing are necessary. (A4, K)
- L2. Every contingent thing has a wholly contingent part. (A1, A2)
- $C_{\text{def}}$  Let C be the aggregate of all wholly contingent things.
- L3. If there are any contingent things, C is a wholly contingent thing.  
(A1, A3, D, L1)
- L4. If there are any contingent things, C has a cause. [L3, C3]
- L5. Every contingent thing overlaps C. (L2, A2,  $C_{\text{def}}$ )
- T. If there are any contingent things, then the cosmos (the sum of all wholly contingent things) has a cause that is a necessary thing. (L4, C2, L5, A1)

# KOON'S CA SIMPLIFIED

- 1) There are contingent things. (P)
- 2) The cosmos is the sum of all wholly contingent things. (D)
- 3) The sum of all wholly contingent things is a wholly contingent thing. (Derived)
- 4) So, the cosmos is a wholly contingent thing. (2, 3)
- 5) Each wholly contingent thing has a cause. (P)
- 6) So, the cosmos has a cause that is not a contingent thing. (5, 4)

# KOON'S CA

- Robert Koons, "A New Look at the Cosmological Argument," *American Philosophical Quarterly* 34/2 (1997), pp. 193-211.
- For a similar argument, see John O'Leary Hawthorne and Andrew Cortens, "The Principle of Necessary Reason," *Faith and Philosophy* 10/1 (1993), pp. 60-67.



# PRUSS AND RASMUSSEN'S CONTINGENCY CA

- 1) For any particular contingent concrete (something that possibly causes something) things, there is an explanation of the fact that those things exist.
- 2) Considering all the contingent concrete things that exist, if there is an explanation of the fact that those things exist, then there is a necessary concrete thing.
- 3) So, there is a necessary concrete thing.

# PRUSS AND RASMUSSEN'S CONTINGENCY CA

- Alexander Pruss and Joshua Rasmussen, *Necessary Existence* (Oxford, 2018), ch. 3.

# EMANUEL RUTTEN'S ATOMISTIC CA

- 1) There are objects.
- 2) Every composite object is ultimately composed of simple objects.
- 3) Every object is caused or is the cause of another objects.
- 4) The sum of all caused simple objects is an object.
- 5) The cause of an object is disjoint with that object.
- 6) Every caused composite object contains a caused proper part.
- 7) There is a first cause.

# EMANUEL RUTTEN'S ATOMISTIC CA

- Emanuel Rutten, *Towards a Renewed Case for Theism* (Wöhrmann, 2012), ch. 6.

# KALAM CA

- 1) Whatever begins to exist has a cause.
- 2) The universe began to exist.
- 3) So, the universe has a cause.

# KALAM CA

- William Lane Craig, *The Kalam Cosmological Argument* (Wipf & Stock, 1979).
- Mark Nowacki, *The Kalam Cosmological Argument for God* (Prometheus, 2007).
- Craig and Sinclair, "The Kalam Cosmological Argument," in Craig and Moreland (eds.), *The Blackwell Companion to Natural Theology* (Blackwell, 2009), 101-200.
- Calum Miller, "A Bayesian Formulation of the Kalam Cosmological Argument," *Religious Studies* 50/4 (2014), pp. 521-534.

# PRUSS' KCA

- 1) Something has a cause.
- 2) There are no causal loops.
- 3) Nothing has an infinite causal history.
- 4) So, there is an uncaused cause. (1-3)
- 5) If there is an uncaused cause, God exists.
- 6) So, God exists.

# PRUSS' KCA

- Alexander Pruss, *Infinity, Causation, and Paradox* (Oxford, 2018).



# SWINBURNE'S INDUCTIVE CA

- 1) The universe exists and is a certain way:
  - a) It is complex, yet everything behaves in an orderly, lawlike way.
  - b) It is such as to be a suitable theater for humans and animals to evolve.
  - c) Humans evolved so as to be able to have true beliefs about the world, and meaningfully act in it.
- 2) If theism can explain why the universe exists and is this way better than naturalism, that the universe exists and is the way it is makes theism more likely than naturalism.
- 3) Theism can explain why the universe exists and is this way better than naturalism.
- 4) So, that the universe exists and is the way it is makes theism more likely than naturalism.

# SWINBURNE'S INDUCTIVE CA

- Richard Swinburne, *The Existence of God* (Oxford, 2004), ch.7.

# SCOTUS' MODAL CA

- 1) Whatever cannot possibly exist from something else possibly exists from itself.
- 2) It's possible that a first causal potency exist.
- 3) The first causal potency cannot possibly exist from something else.
- 4) So, it's possible that a first causal potency exists from itself. (1-3)
- 5) What is nonexistent cannot bring anything into existence.
- 6) Even if [per impossible] what is nonexistent could bring itself into existence, it would not be altogether uncausable.
- 7) So, it is not possible for something to exist from itself which does not actually exist from itself.
- 8) So, a first causal potency does exist from itself. (4, 7)

# SCOTUS' MODAL CA

- Scotus, *Tractatus De Primo Principio* 3.1-19.
- Timothy O'Connor, "Scotus on the Existence of a First Efficient Cause" *International Journal for the Philosophy of Religion* 33 (1993), pp. 17-32.

# JAMES ROSS' MODAL CA

- 1) It is impossible that anything prevent the existence of God.
- 2) For every individual  $x$ , if it is a fact that  $x$  exists or a fact that  $x$  does not exist, it is possible that there is an explanation for the fact that  $x$  exists of the fact that  $x$  does not exist. (PSR)
- 3) [Suppose] God does not exist.
- 4) It is possible that there is an explanation for the fact that God does not exist. (1, 2)
- 5) It is not possible that there is an explanation for the fact that God does not exist. (From 1)
- 6) It is and is not possible that there is an explanation for the fact that God does not exist. [4, 5, contradiction)
- 7) It is false that God does not exist. (3-6)

# JAMES ROSS' MODAL CA

- James F. Ross, *Philosophical Theology* (Bobbs-Merrill, 1969), pp. 173-181.
- Outline borrowed from Richard Gale, *On the Nature and Existence of God* (Cambridge, 1991), pp. 203-205.

# CHRISTOPHER WEAVER'S MODAL CA

- 1) If there is a sum of purely contingent facts, it possibly has a cause.
- 2) There is a sum of purely contingent facts.
- 3) So, the sum of purely contingent facts possibly has a cause. (1, 2 MP)
- 4) If the sum of purely contingent facts possibly has a cause, then it has a cause. (from (1))
- 5) So, the sum of purely contingent facts has a cause. (3, 4 MP)
- 6) If the sum of purely contingent facts has a cause, then there is a necessary, concrete cause.
- 7) So, there is a necessary concrete cause. (5, 6 MP)

# CHRISTOPHER WEAVER'S MODAL CA

- Christopher Weaver, "Yet Another New Cosmological Argument," *International Journal for Philosophy of Religion* 80 (2016), pp. 11-31.



# RASMUSSEN AND WEAVER

- 1) It is possible that there is a purely contingent totality event that has a cause.
- 2) It is impossible that a cause of a purely contingent totality event is purely contingent.
- 3) If (1) and (2), then it is possible that there is a cause that isn't purely contingent.
- 4) If (3), then there is a necessary thing that can be a cause.
- 5) So, there is a necessary thing that can be a cause.

# RASMUSSEN AND WEAVER

- Joshua Rasmussen and Christopher Weaver, “Why is There Anything at All,” in Walls and Dougherty (eds.), *Two Dozen (or so) Arguments for God* (Oxford, 2018), pp. 137-156.

# PRUSS AND RASMUSSEN'S MODAL CA

- 1) For any positive state of affairs that can begin to obtain, it is possible for there to be something external to it that causes it to obtain.
- 2) It is possible for there to be a beginning of the positive state of affairs of its being the case that there exist contingent concrete things.
- 3) If (1) and (2) are true, then it is possible that there is a necessary concrete thing.
- 4) So, it is possible that there is a necessary concrete thing.
- 5) If it is possible that there is a necessary concrete thing, then there is a necessary concrete thing.
- 6) So, there is a necessary concrete thing.

# PRUSS AND RASMUSSEN'S MODAL CA

- Alexander Pruss and Joshua Rasmussen, *Necessary Existence* (Oxford, 2018), ch. 4.

# DESCARTE'S CA

- 1) There must be in the cause of an idea at least as much formal reality as the idea contains objective reality.
- 2) I have the idea of God.
- 3) My idea of God is the effect of some cause.
- 4) The idea of God has infinite objective reality.
- 5) So, the idea of God has a cause with infinite formal reality.
- 6) No finite substance (e.g., myself) can be the cause of my idea of God.
- 7) Only an infinite substance can be the cause of my idea of God.
- 8) So, God exists.

# DESCARTE'S CA SIMPLIFIED

- 1) I have the idea of a perfect being—i.e., God.
- 2) Ideas, like other things, have causes—some by other ideas, some by extra-mental realities the ideas are of.
- 3) But my idea of God cannot have been caused by other ideas of my own.
- 4) So, my idea of God is caused by the extra-mental reality it is an idea of: that which actually possesses those perfections; i.e., God.

# DESCARTE'S CA

- Descartes, *Meditation III*.
- Frank Dilley, "Descartes Cosmological Argument," *The Monist* 54/3 (1970), pp. 427-440.
- Robert Delahunty, "Descartes' Cosmological Argument," *The Philosophical Quarterly* 30/118 (1980), pp. 34-46.

# ***THE COSMOLOGICAL ARGUMENT***

- 1) Everything has a cause.
- 2) If everything has a cause, the universe has a cause.
- 3) So, the universe has a cause and it's God.



# ***THE COSMOLOGICAL ARGUMENT***

- Said no one, ever.

# ONTOLOGICAL ARGUMENTS

## **ANSELM, *PROSLOGION* II**

- 1) [Suppose] God exists in the understanding but not in reality.
- 2) Existence in reality is greater than existence in the understanding alone.
- 3) A being having all of God's properties plus existence in reality can be conceived.
- 4) A being having all of God's properties plus existence in reality is greater than God. (1, 2)
- 5) A being greater than God can be conceived. (3, 4)
- 6) It is false that a being greater than God can be conceived. (def. of "God")
- 7) So, it is false that God exists in the understanding but not in reality. (1, 5, 6)
- 8) So, God exists in reality.

# **ANSELM, *PROSLOGION* II**

**Alternative:**

- 1) A being than which no greater can be conceived exists at least in the mind.**
- 2) It is greater to exist in reality than to exist only in the mind.**
- 3) So, a being than which no greater can be conceived exists not only in the mind but also in reality.**
- 4) So, God exists.**

**“I clearly see that existence can no more be separated from the essence of God than can its having three angles equal to two right angles be separated from the essence of a triangle, or the idea of a mountain from the idea of a valley; so there is no less absurdity in thinking of a God (a supremely perfect being) who lacks existence than in thinking of a mountain without a valley.”**

**- Descartes**

# DESCARTES

- 1) If I cannot conceive of  $x$  without  $y$ , then  $y$  belongs to the nature of  $x$ .
- 2) I cannot conceive of a supremely perfect being without existence.
- 3) Therefore, existence belongs to the nature of a supremely perfect being. (1, 2)
- 4) If existence belongs to the nature of a supremely perfect being, then a supremely perfect being exists.
- 5) A supremely perfect being exists. (3, 4)

# MALCOLM ON ANSELM'S *PROSLOGION* III

- 1) It is possible that the greatest conceivable being exists.
- 2) The greatest conceivable being is unlimited.
- 3) Everything that is unlimited is so IFF it does not depend on anything else for its existence or nonexistence and it neither just happens to exist nor just happens not to exist.
- 4) Everything that does not depend on anything else for its existence or nonexistence is such IFF no other being causes it to begin to exist and no other being causes it to cease to exist.
- 5) Anything that begins to exist is caused to begin to exist by some other being, or it just happens to begin to exist.
- 6) Anything that ceases to exist is caused to cease to exist by some other being, or it just happens to cease to exist.
- 7) Anything that neither begins nor ceases to exist exists necessarily if it exists at all, and fails to exist necessarily if it exists at all.
- 8) So, The greatest conceivable being exists.

## **ANSELM'S *PROSLOGION* III**

- 1) Either God's existence is logically impossible or it is logically necessary.
- 2) If God's existence is logically impossible, the concept of God is contradictory.
- 3) The concept of God is not contradictory.
- 4) So, God's existence is logically necessary.



# HARTSHORNE ON ANSELM'S *PROSLOGION* III

- 1) If a perfect being exists, it exists necessarily.
- 2) Either a perfect being exists necessarily or not. (EM)
- 3) If not, then necessarily, a perfect being does not exist necessarily.
- 4) So, either a perfect being exists necessarily or necessarily, a perfect being does not exist necessarily.
- 5) If, necessarily, a perfect being does not exist necessarily, then necessarily, a perfect being does not exist.
- 6) Either a perfect being exists necessarily or necessarily, a perfect being does not exist.
- 7) It's not the case that necessarily, a perfect being does not exist (it's possible that a perfect being exists.)
- 8) A perfect being exists necessarily.

# MAYDOLE'S RECONSTRUCTION

- 1) It is possible that a perfect being exists.
- 2) Necessarily, if a perfect being exists, then a perfect being necessarily exists.
- 3) So, a perfect being exists.

# **ANSELM'S *OTHER* OTHER ARGUMENT**

- 1) If anything that cannot be conceived to be caused can be conceived to exist, it actually exists.
- 2) God can be conceived to exist but cannot be conceived to be caused.
- 3) Therefore, God actually exists.

# **ANSELM'S *OTHER* OTHER ARGUMENT**

- 1) For any kind of thing, if there is not, but possibly could be, something of that kind, then it is possible for something of that kind to be caused.
- 2) There could possibly be something divine.
- 3) It is not possible for anything divine to be caused.
- 4) Therefore, something divine exists.

# ANSELM'S *OTHER OTHER* ARGUMENT

- A. D. Smith, *Anselm's Other Argument* (Harvard, 2014).

# PLANTINGA

- 1) There is a possible world in which a maximally great being exists.
- 2) If there is a possible world in which a maximally great being exists, a maximally great being exists in all possible worlds (including the actual world).
- 3) So, a maximally great being exists in all possible worlds (including the actual world).

# THE MODAL OA SIMPLIFIED

- 1) Possibly, God exists.
- 2) God exists.

# KEY MODAL INFERENCE

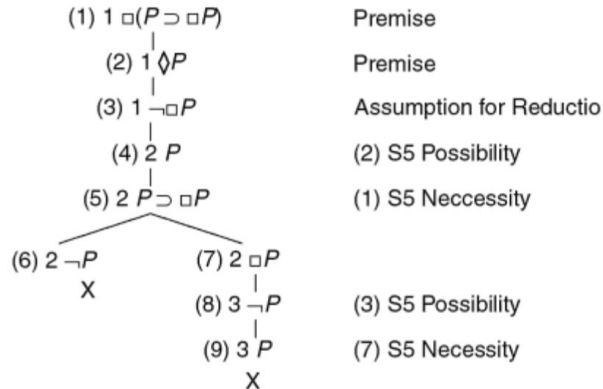
Formal Proof of the following in S5:

Necessarily, if God exists, He exists necessarily.  
It is possible that God should exist.  
Therefore, He exists necessarily.

$\Box(P \supset \Box P)$

$\Diamond P$

Therefore,  $\Box P$



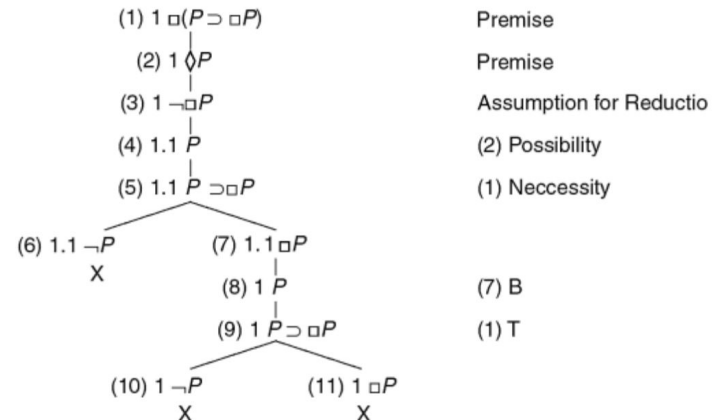
Formal Proof of the following in B:

Necessarily, if God exists, He exists necessarily.  
It is possible that God should exist.  
Therefore, He exists necessarily.

$\Box(P \supset \Box P)$

$\Diamond P$

Therefore,  $\Box P$





# DEFENSES OF THE POSSIBILITY PREMISE

- Motivational Center of Our Lives Defense
- Arbour's Cumulative Credence Raiser Argument
- Axiarchic Defense
- Ontomystical Defense
- Phenomenal Defense

# THE PHENOMENAL DEFENSE

I am *prima facie* justified in believing  $p$  is possible based on its appearing possible to me IFF if it's reasonable to believe that if  $p$  were impossible, it would probably appear impossible upon further reflection.

- 1) It appears to me that God possibly exists.
- 2) It is reasonable for me to believe that if it is impossible that God exists, it would probably appear to me that it is impossible that God exists upon further reflection.
- 3) So, I am *prima facie* justified in believing God possibly exists.

# THE PHENOMENAL DEFENSE

- C. A. McIntosh, "A Defense of Modal Appearances," *International Journal for Philosophy of Religion*, forthcoming.

# GODEL

- Def. 1.** Something is God-like IFF it has every positive property.
- Def. 2.** A property is an essence of IFF it entails all the other properties it has.
- Def. 3.** Something necessarily exists IFF its essence is necessarily instantiated.
  
- A1.** A property is positive IFF its negation is not.
- A2.** Positive properties entail only positive properties.
- A3.** The property of being God-like is positive.
- A4.** Positive properties are necessarily positive.
- A5.** Necessary existence is positive.
  
- T1.** It is possible that something is God-like.
- T2.** God-likeness is the essence of whatever is God-like.
- T3.** There is something God-like.

# GODEL

- C. Anthony Anderson, "Some Emendations on Gödel's Ontological Proof," *Faith and Philosophy* 7 (1990), pp. 291-303.
- Alexander Pruss, "A Gödelian Ontological Argument Improved Even More," in Szatkowski (ed.), *Ontological Proofs Today* (Ontos Verlag, 2012), ch. 10.
- Pruss, "Gödel" in Oppy (ed.), *Ontological Arguments* (Cambridge, 2018), pp. 139-154.

# PRUSS' IMPROVEMENT

- A1. If  $P$  is positive, then  $\sim P$  is not positive.
- A2. If  $P$  is positive and  $P$  entails  $Q$ , then  $Q$  is positive.
- A3. Necessary existence is positive.
  
- T1. Given A1-A3, then there is a necessarily existent being that essentially has  $P$ .

# MAYDOLE'S MODAL PERFECTION ARGUMENT

Def. 1. A property is a perfection only if it is necessarily better to have than not.

Def. 2. Something has the property of being supreme IFF it is impossible for something to be greater and impossible for there to be something else than which is not greater.

- (1) A property is a perfection only if its negation is not.
- (2) Perfections entail only perfections.
- (3) The property of being supreme is a perfection.
- (4) So, it is possible that a supreme being exists.
- (5) If it is possible that a supreme being exists, a supreme being exists.
- (6) So, a supreme being exists.

# MAYDOLE'S MODAL PERFECTION ARGUMENT

## Deduction

1	$\Diamond(\exists x)S_1x$	pr
2	$\Diamond(\exists x)S_1x \supset (\exists x)\Diamond S_1x$	theorem <sup>35</sup>
3	$(\exists x)\Diamond S_1x$	1, 2 MP
4	$\Diamond S_1v$	3, EI
5	$\Diamond(\sim\Diamond(\exists y)Gyv \ \& \ \sim\Diamond(\exists y)(v\neq y \ \& \ \sim Gvy))$	4, df “ $S_1$ ”
6	$\Diamond(\sim\Diamond(\exists y)Gyv \ \& \ \sim\Diamond(\exists y)(v\neq y \ \& \ \sim Gvy)) \supset$ $(\Diamond\sim\Diamond(\exists y)Gyv \ \& \ \Diamond\sim\Diamond(\exists y)(v\neq y \ \& \ \sim Gvy))$	theorem
7	$(\Diamond\sim\Diamond(\exists y)Gyv \ \& \ \Diamond\sim\Diamond(\exists y)(v\neq y \ \& \ \sim Gvy))$	4, 5 MP
8	$\Diamond\sim\Diamond(\exists y)Gyv$	7 Simp
9	$\Diamond\sim\Diamond(\exists y)(v\neq y \ \& \ \sim Gvy)$	7 Com, Simp
10	$\Diamond\sim\Diamond(\exists y)Gyv \supset \sim\Diamond(\exists y)Gyv$	theorem
11	$\Diamond\sim\Diamond(\exists y)(v\neq y \ \& \ \sim Gvy) \supset \sim\Diamond(\exists y)(v\neq y \ \& \ \sim Gvy)$	theorem
12	$\sim\Diamond(\exists y)Gyv$	8, 10 MP
13	$\sim\Diamond(\exists y)(v\neq y \ \& \ \sim Gvy)$	9, 11 MP
14	$\sim\Diamond(\exists y)Gyv \ \& \ \sim\Diamond(\exists y)(v\neq y \ \& \ \sim Gvy)$	12, 13 Conj
15	$S_1v$	14, df “ $S_1$ ”
16	$(\exists x)S_1x$	15 EG



# MAYDOLE'S MODAL PERFECTION ARGUMENT

- Robert Maydole, "Ontological Arguments," in Craig and Moreland (eds.), *The Blackwell Companion to Natural Theology* (Blackwell, 2009), ch. 10.

# BERNSTEIN

- 1) [Suppose] It is impossible that something has all perfections.
- 2) If it is impossible that something has all perfections, then there is a perfection that is sufficient for not having some other perfection (namely, the one with which it is inconsistent).
- 3) If a property is sufficient for not having some perfection, then that property is sufficient for being imperfect.
- 4) If a property is sufficient for being imperfect, then it is not a perfection.
- 5) There is some perfection that is sufficient for not having some perfection. (1, 2)
- 6) There is some perfection that is sufficient for being imperfect. (3, 5)
- 7) There is some perfection that is not a perfection. ( $\perp$  4, 6)
- 8) Possibly, something has all perfections.

# BERNSTEIN

- C'Zar Bernstein, "Is God's Existence Possible?" *Heythrop Journal* 59/3 (2018), pp. 424-432.
- C'Zar Bernstein, "Giving the Ontological Argument its Due," *Philosophia* 42/3 (2014), pp. 665-679.

# NAGASAWA'S MAXIMAL GOD APPROACH

- 1) There is a possible world in which a real maximally great being exists. (now true by definition)
- 2) If there is a possible world in which a real maximally great being exists, a real maximally great being exists in all possible worlds (including the actual world).
- 3) So, a real maximally great being exists in all possible worlds (including the actual world).

# NAGASAWA'S MAXIMAL GOD APPROACH

- Yujin Nagasawa, *Maximal God* (Oxford, 2017).

# DESIGN ARGUMENTS

# THE ARGUMENT FROM BANANAS



# **AQUINAS' FIFTH WAY**

- 1) Whatever has ends or goals is either intelligent or is directed by intelligence.**
- 2) Efficient causes in nature have ends or goals, and work together towards the goal of harmony and order.**
- 3) Efficient causes in nature are not intelligent.**
- 4) So, efficient causes in nature are directed by intelligence.**



**“To admit that things order themselves by accident, is to admit that there is room in the universe for an effect, namely their very order, without a cause. For it the form proper to each body, is sufficient to explain the particular function of that body, yet it by no means explains why the different bodies and their different functions arrange themselves in a harmonious whole.”**

**- Etienne Gilson**

# **AQUINAS' FIFTH WAY: SIMPLIFIED**

- 1) Intelligence underlies teleology.
- 2) There is irreducible teleology immanent to the natural order.
- 3) So, intelligence underlies the natural order.

# AQUINAS' FIFTH WAY

- Edward Feser, "Between Aristotle and William Paley: Aquinas' Fifth Way," in Feser, *Neo-Scholastic Essays* (St. Augustine's Press, 2015), pp. 147-192.
- Michael Hays, "Aquinas' Fifth Way and the Possibility of Science," in Arp (ed.), *Revisiting Aquinas' Proofs for the Existence of God* (Brill, 2016), ch. 17.
- Etienne Gilson, *The Philosophy of St. Thomas Aquinas* (Books for Libraries Press, 1971 [1937]), p. 93.

# **DESIGN IN BIOLOGY:**

## **ORIGIN OF ORGANIC LIFE**

- 1) Given what we know, complex organic life in the universe could not have originated naturalistically.**
- 2) If, given what we know complex organic life in the universe could not have originated naturalistically, it's reasonable to believe it originated supernaturalistically.**
- 3) So, it's reasonable to believe that complex organic life originated supernaturalistically.**

# DESIGN IN BIOLOGY:

## ORIGIN OF ORGANIC LIFE

- Charles B. Thaxton, Walter L. Bradley, Roger L. Olsen, *The Mystery of Life's Origin: Reassessing Current Theories* (Lewis & Stanley, 1992).
- Stephen Meyer, *The Signature in the Cell* (HarperOne, 2010).

# CHANDLER'S DIVINE INTERVENTION ARGUMENT

- 1) Given that God intervenes to produce life of Earth, there is no chance at all that there will be no life on earth (the probability of the conjunct "God intervenes to produce life on Earth" and "Life does not occur on Earth" is zero).
- 2) If God does not intervene to produce life on Earth, the probability that life will occur here is very low.
- 3) It is just as reasonable to bet that God will intervene to produce life on Earth as that he won't (the subjective probability is around 50/50).
- 4) But there will be life on Earth.
- 5) So, it is very likely that God will intervene to produce life on Earth.

# CHANDLER'S DIVINE INTERVENTION ARGUMENT

- Hugh Chandler, "Divine Intervention and the Origin of Life," *Faith and Philosophy* 10/2 (1993), pp. 170-180.

# DESIGN IN BIOLOGY: ORGANIC STRUCTURES

**Vulgar version of Paley:**

- 1) Some things in nature resemble human artifacts.**
- 2) Human artifacts are the product of intentional design.**
- 3) So, we should infer that things in nature that resemble human artifacts are also products of intentional design.**
- 4) If there are things in nature that are products of intentional design, God exists.**
- 5) So, God exists.**



# DESIGN IN BIOLOGY: ORGANIC STRUCTURES

More faithful version of Paley:

- 1) If  $x$  is design-like, then  $x$  can only be the product of intentional design.
- 2) Some things in nature are design-like.
- 3) So, some things in nature are products of intentional design.

# **PRUSS' ANALOGICAL DA**

- 1) DNA is like an intentionally designed computer program.**
- 2) Intentionally designed computer programs have intelligent designers.**
- 3) If DNA is like an intentionally designed computer program, it, too probably has an intelligent designer.**
- 4) So DNA probably has an intelligent designer.**

# PRUSS' ANALOGICAL DA

- Alexander Pruss, "Programs, Bugs, DNA, and a Design Argument" in Nagasawa and Wielenberg (eds.), *New Waves in Philosophy of Religion* (Palgrave, 2009).

# DESIGN IN BIOLOGY: INFORMATION

- 1) Information is inherent to the building blocks of life.
- 2) Information is the product of intelligence.
- 3) If information is inherent to the building blocks of life, then the building blocks of life themselves are the byproduct of intelligence.
- 4) So, the building blocks of life are the byproduct of intelligence.

# DESIGN IN BIOLOGY: INFORMATION

- Stephen Meyer, *The Signature in the Cell* (HarperOne, 2010).
- Robert Marks II, et al. (eds.), *Biological Information: New Perspectives* (World Scientific Publishing Co., 2013).

# TENNANT'S ARGUMENT FROM COSMIC TELEOLOGY

- 1) The universe is conspicuously suitable for intelligent, moral beings in many ways.
  - a) There is just one universe with the necessary ingredients for life.
  - b) Those ingredients have come together (at least in one place) to make an environment not just habitable, but conducive to the flourishing of organic life.
  - c) Some of those world's flourishing inhabitants find the world intelligible (namely, us).
  - d) Being intelligible, they also find it beautiful.
  - e) All of these facts together suggest the unfolding of a plan, behind which is "purposive intelligence."
- 2) If the universe is conspicuously suitable for intelligent, moral in many ways, then it should be regarded as a theater for the lives of intelligent, moral agents designed by God.
- 3) So, the universe should be regarded as a theater for the lives of intelligent, moral beings designed by God.

# TENNANT'S ARGUMENT FROM COSMIC TELEOLOGY

- F. R. Tennant, *Philosophical Theology* Vol. II (Cambridge, 1930), pp. 78-120.

# FINE-TUNING ARGUMENTS

Fundamental constants and laws of the universe:

- Fine structure constant
- Electromagnetic interaction  $\alpha$
- Gravitation  $\alpha G$
- Weak nuclear force  $\alpha W$
- Proton-to-electron mass ratio  $m_p/m_e$
- Density  $\Omega_0$  and speed  $H_0$  of expansion of the universe



# FINE-TUNING ARGUMENTS

## Examples of fine-tuning:

- Changes in either  $\alpha_G$  or electromagnetism by one part in  $10^{40}$  would have precluded the existence of stars like the sun, and, as a consequence, planets, and ultimately embodied conscious agents (ECAs).
- Changes in either  $\alpha_G$  or  $\alpha_W$  by only one part in  $10^{100}$  would have prevented our existence.
- If  $m_p$  increased by just 0.2%, hydrogen would be unstable, preventing our existence.
- If  $m_p$  were slightly weaker, nothing but helium would have been synthesized in the universe, preventing our existence.
- $10^{-43}$  seconds after the Big Bang (Planck Time),  $\Omega_0$  had to be within about  $10^{60}$  of critical density to “flatten” space (known as the “flatness problem”), a prerequisite for our existence.
- Roger Penrose famously calculated that the exact entropy condition suitable for the formation of life (including us) by chance alone, to be  $10^{10^{123}}$

# FTA BY ELIMINATION

- 1) The fine-tuning of the universe is due either to chance, physical necessity, or design.
- 2) Fine-tuning is not due to either chance or physical necessity.
- 3) So, the fine-tuning is due to design.

# FTA BY ELIMINATION

- William Lane Craig, *Reasonable Faith* (Corssway, 2008), pp. 157-172.
- William Dembski, *The Design Inference* (Cambridge, 1998).

# FTA BY BAYES

**E = Evidence of fine-tuning**

**K = The universe permits the existence of ECAs**

**T = Theism**

- 1)  $\Pr(E | K \& \sim T)$  is very low.
- 2)  $\Pr(E | K \& T)$  is very high.
- 3)  $\Pr(T | K) \gg \Pr(E | K \& \sim T)$ .
- 4) So,  $\Pr(T | E \& K)$  is very high

# FTA BY BAYES

- Richard Swinburne, *The Existence of God* (Oxford, 2004).

# COLLINS ON THE FTA

NSU = Naturalistic Single Universe

- 1)  $P(K | NSU) \ll 1$
- 2)  $\sim P(K | T) \ll 1$
- 3)  $P(T | K) \gg P(NSU | K)$

# **COLLINS ON THE FTA**

- **Robin Collins, “The Teleological Argument: An Exploration of the Fine-Tuning of the Universe,” in Craig and Moreland (eds.), *The Blackwell Companion to Natural Theology* (Blackwell, 2009), ch. 4.**
- **Collins’ book, *A Well-Tempered Universe*, has been forthcoming for over 20 years.**

# **FINE-TUNING FOR DISCOVERABILITY**

- 1) The values of certain physical constants fall within the discoverability-optimality range within the anthropic range.**
- 2) If naturalism is true, it is enormously improbable that the values of certain physical constants would fall within the discoverability-optimality range within the anthropic range.**
- 3) If theism is true, it is not improbable that the values of certain physical constants would fall within the discoverability-optimality range within the anthropic range.**
- 4) So, that the values of certain physical constants would fall within the discoverability-optimality range within the anthropic range strongly confirms theism over naturalism.**



# FINE-TUNING FOR DISCOVERABILITY

- Robin Collins, "Fine-Tuning for Discoverability," in Walls and Dougherty (eds.), *Two Dozen (or so) Arguments for God* (Oxford, 2018), pp. 89-107.

# PERCEIVING DESIGN

- 1) If  $x$  appears design-like, then  $x$  is justifiably taken to be the product of intentional design.
- 2) Some things in nature appear design-like.
- 3) So, some things in nature are justifiably taken to be products of intentional design.

# PERCEIVING DESIGN

- Del Ratzsch, "Perceiving Design," in Neil Manson (ed.), *God and Design* (Routledge, 2003), pp. 124-144.
- Alvin Plantinga, *Where the Conflict Really Lies* (Oxford, 2011), ch. 8.
- C. Stephen Evans, "The Naïve Teleological Argument," in Walls and Dougherty (eds.), *Two Dozen (or so) Arguments for God* (Oxford, 2018), pp. 108-122.

# **MORAL ARGUMENTS**

# OBJECTIVITY OF MORALITY

- 1) Morality is Objective only if God exists.
- 2) Morality is objective.
- 3) So, God exists.

# ABDUCTIVE VERSION

- 1) **Morality is objective.**
- 2) **If morality is objective, God is the best explanation for its being objective.**
- 3) **So, God is the best explanation for morality's being objective.**
- 4) **So, probably, God exists.**

# THE NORMATIVE IMPLICATIONS OF EVIL

- 1) Evil contrastively implies that there is a way the world ought to be.
- 2) There is a way the world ought to be only if there is an intention or goal or design or purpose behind it.
- 3) So, there is an intention or goal design or purpose behind the world.
- 4) There is an intention or goal or design or purpose behind the world only if God exists.
- 5) So, God exists.

# THE NORMATIVE IMPLICATIONS OF EVIL

- Gregory Ganssle, “Evil as Evidence for Christianity,” in Meister and Dew (eds.), *God and Evil* (IVP, 2013), ch. 15.



# EVIL AS PRIVATION OF THE GOOD

- 1) Evil is a privation of goodness.
- 2) If evil is a privation of goodness, goodness is ontologically and explanatorily prior to evil.
- 3) If goodness is ontologically and explanatorily prior to evil, there is more goodness in the world than evil.
- 4) If there is more goodness in the world than evil, probably, God exists.
- 5) So, probably, God exists.

# EVIL AS PRIVATION OF THE GOOD

- David Alexander, *God, Goodness, and Evil* (Bloomsbury, 2012), ch. 5.

# HORRENDOUS EVILS

- 1) Some evils are so horrendous that they seem to have a non-naturalistic dimension to them.
- 2) If (1), we are justified in thinking they do have a non-naturalistic dimension to them.
- 3) The best explanation of there being evils so horrendous that they have a non-naturalistic dimension is that good and evil have deep spiritual significance.
- 4) So, probably, good and evil have deep spiritual significance.
- 5) If good and evil have deep spiritual significance, then something like theism is probably true.
- 6) So, something like theism is probably true.

# HORRENDOUS EVILS

- Alvin Plantinga, "Two Dozen (or so) Theistic Arguments," in Walls and Dougherty (eds.), *Two Dozen (or so) Arguments for God* (Oxford, 2018), pp. 476-477.
- See also C. S. Lewis, discussed in Baggett and Walls, *The Moral Argument* (Oxford, 2019), p. 167.

# UNIVERSAL MORAL BELIEFS

- 1) Certain moral beliefs are shared by all of humanity.
- 2) If certain moral beliefs are shared by all of humanity, God is the best explanation of that.
- 3) So, God is the best explanation of there being certain moral beliefs shared by all of humanity.
- 4) So, probably, God exists.

# UNIVERSAL MORAL BELIEFS

- C. S. Lewis, *Abolition of Man*.

# SIDGWICK AND KANT

- 1) Acting morally is always rational only if it's always what's ultimately best for me.
- 2) Acting morally is always what's ultimately best for me only if God exists.
- 3) So, acting morally is always rational only if God exists. (1, 2)
- 4) Acting morally is always rational.
- 5) So, God exists. (3, 4)

# SIDGWICK AND KANT

- Gathered from David Baggett and Jerry Walls, *Good God: The Theistic Foundations of Morality* (Oxford, 2011), pp. 12-15.



# A KANTIAN ARGUMENT FROM ADAMS

- 1) If a belief is demoralizing, it is morally undesirable.
- 2) If a belief is morally undesirable, there is moral advantage in believing the opposite.
- 3) It is demoralizing to believe that there is no moral order in the universe.
- 4) So, it is morally undesirable to believe that there is no moral order in the universe.
- 5) So, there is moral advantage in believing there is moral order in the universe.

# A KANTIAN ARGUMENT FROM ADAMS

- 6) Theism is the best explanation of their being moral order in the universe.
- 7) If theism is the best explanation of their being moral order in the universe, there is moral advantage in accepting theism.
- 8) If there is moral advantage in accepting a position, you should accept that position.
- 9) So, you should accept theism.

# A KANTIAN ARGUMENT FROM ADAMS

- Robert Adams, “Moral Arguments for Theistic Belief,” in Adams, *The Virtue of Faith and Other Essays in Philosophical Theology* (Oxford, 1987), ch. 10.

# ODERBERG ON COSMIC JUSTICE

- 1) We live in a rational moral order.
- 2) If we live in a rational moral order, there is cosmic justice.
- 3) So, there is cosmic justice. (1, 2)
- 4) If there is cosmic justice, there must be a cosmic judge who administers it.
- 5) So, there is a cosmic judge who administers cosmic justice. (3, 4)

# ODERBERG ON COSMIC JUSTICE

- David Oderberg, "Morality, Religion, and Cosmic Justice," *Philosophical Investigations* 34/2 (2011), pp. 189-213.

# LAYMAN'S MORAL ARGUMENT

- 1) One always has most reason to do what is morally required.
- 2) If there is no God or afterlife, there are cases where morality requires one to make great personal sacrifice for only modest benefits.
- 3) If there are cases where morality requires one to make great personal sacrifice for only modest benefits, then one does not always have the most reason to do what is morally required.
- 4) So, if there is no God or afterlife, then in some cases one does not have the most reason to do what is morally required. (2, 3)
- 5) So, it's false that there is no God or afterlife. (1, 4)

# LAYMAN'S MORAL ARGUMENT

- C. Stephen Layman, "God and the Moral Order," *Faith and Philosophy* 19/3 (2002), pp. 304-316.

# THE NEED FOR DIVINE AID IN BEING MORAL

- 1) It is rational to try to be moral only if it's rational to believe the attempt would likely be successful.
- 2) But it's not rational to believe the attempt would likely be successful if all we have is our own human faculties to go on.
- 3) But it is rational to try to be moral.
- 4) So, it's rational to believe the attempt would likely be successful. (1, 3)
- 5) So, we have more than just our own human faculties to go on. (2, 4)



# THE NEED FOR DIVINE AID IN BEING MORAL

- 6) If a theory postulates exactly what more we need to be rational in believing the attempt at being moral would likely be successful, then its rational to believe that theory.
- 7) Christian theism postulates exactly what more we need to be rational in believing the attempt at being moral would likely be successful.
- 8) So, it's rational to believe Christian theism.

# THE NEED FOR DIVINE AID IN BEING MORAL

- Linda Zagzebski, "Does Ethics need God?" *Faith and Philosophy* 4/3 (1987), pp. 294-303.

# THE MORAL GAP

- 1) If one ought to do  $x$ , one can do  $x$ .
- 2) One ought to live up to the demands of morality.
- 3) So, one can live up to the demands of morality. (1, 2)
- 4) One can live up to the demands of morality only if one has the requisite extra-human assistance.
- 5) So, one has the requisite extra-human assistance. (3, 4)
- 6) If a theory postulates exactly the extra-human assistance needed to live up to the demands of morality, it is rational to believe that theory.
- 7) Christian theism postulates exactly the extra-human assistance needed to live up to the demands of morality.
- 8) So, it is rational to believe Christian theism.

# THE MORAL GAP

- John Hare, *The Moral Gap* (Oxford, 1996).

# DUTY TO PROMOTE HIGHEST GOOD

- 1) We ought (morally) to promote the realization of the highest good.
- 2) What we ought to do must be possible for us to do.
- 3) So, it is possible for us to promote the realization of the highest good.
- 4) It is possible for us to promote the realization of the highest good only if there exists a God who makes that realization possible.
- 5) So, there exists such a God.

# DUTY TO PROMOTE HIGHEST GOOD

- Kant, *Critique of Practical Reason*.
- Stewart Goetz, *The Purpose of Life* (Continuum, 2012), ch. 2.

# OBJECTIVE OBLIGATIONS AND DUTIES

- 1) We have objective moral obligations and duties.
- 2) If we have objective moral obligations and duties, they are best understood as divine commands.
- 3) So, objective moral obligations are best understood as divine commands.
- 4) If objective moral obligations are best understood as divine commands, God exists.
- 5) So, God exists.

# OBJECTIVE OBLIGATIONS AND DUTIES

- George Mavrodes, "Religion and the Queerness of Morality."
- Robert Adams, *Finite and Infinite Goods* (Oxford, 1999).
- C. Stephen Evans, *God and Moral Obligation* (Oxford, 2013).



# ARGUMENT FROM CONSCIENCE

- 1) Guilt, shame, responsibility, etc. are only appropriately felt in relation to other moral agents.
- 2) But sometimes we appropriately feel guilt, shame, responsibility, etc. for deed done in secret (that harm no others).
- 3) Guilt, shame, responsibility, etc. for deeds done in secret are appropriately felt only if there's another moral agent that's privy to deeds done in secret. (1)
- 4) So, there's another moral agent privy to deeds done in secret. (2, 3)
- 5) If there's another moral agent privy to deeds done in secret, it's God.
- 6) So, God exists.

# ARGUMENT FROM CONSCIENCE

- John Henry Newman, *A Grammar of Assent* (1870), ch. 5.
- My own reconstruction based on discussion of Newman in Mackie, *The Miracle of Theism* (Oxford, 1982), pp. 103-106 and Oppy, *Arguing About Gods* (Cambridge, 2006), pp. 369ff.

# THE INTRINSIC HARMFULNESS OF WRONGDOING

- 1) Wrongdoing is intrinsically harmful to the wrongdoer.
- 2) Wrongdoing is intrinsically harmful to the wrongdoer only if that harm is punishment from a God-like being.
- 3) So, there is a God-like being.

# THE INTRINSIC HARMFULNESS OF WRONGDOING

- Clement Dore, *Theism* (D. Reidel, 1984), ch. 4.

# MORAL KNOWLEDGE

- 1) We have moral knowledge.
- 2) If naturalism is true, then we very probably don't have moral knowledge.
- 3) If theism is true, we very probably do have moral knowledge.
- 4) So, our having moral knowledge is strong evidence for theism and against naturalism.

# MORAL KNOWLEDGE

- Mark Linville, "The Moral Argument," in Craig and Moreland (eds.), *The Blackwell Companion to Natural Theology* (Blackwell, 2009), ch. 7.
- Angus Menuge, "Why Humans Rights Cannot be Naturalized: The Contingency Problem," in Menuge (ed.), *Legitimizing Human Rights* (Ashgate, 2013), ch. 3.

# APPREHENSION OF OBJECTIVE NORMS

- 1) We have the capacity to apprehend objective moral norms.
- 2) The best explanation for (1) is that is that our cognitive faculties are intended to apprehend objective moral norms.
- 3) So, probably, our cognitive faculties are intended to apprehend objective moral norms.
- 4) Theism is the best explanation of our having cognitive faculties intended to apprehend objective moral norms.
- 5) So, probably, theism is true.

# APPREHENSION OF OBJECTIVE NORMS

- Angus Ritchie, *From Morality to Metaphysics* (Oxford, 2012).



# ALTRUISM: SCHLOSS

- 1) Genuine altruism exists and is rational.
- 2) If naturalism is true, genuine altruism does not exist and is irrational.
- 3) So, naturalism is false.
- 4) If theism is true, genuine altruism probably does exist and is rational.
- 5) So, the existence and rationality of genuine altruism is strongly confirms theism.

# ALTRUISM: SCHLOSS

- Jeffrey Schloss, "Evolutionary Accounts of Altruism and the Problem of Goodness by Design," in Dembski (ed.), *Mere Creation* (IVP, 1998), ch. 10.
- Colin Grant, *Altruism and Christian Ethics* (Cambridge, 2001).

# ALTRUISM: PRUSS

- 1) Moral altruism is irreducibly normative.
- 2) There can be no naturalistic explanation for moral altruism is irreducibly normative.
- 3) So, there can be no naturalistic explanation for moral altruism.
- 4) If there are good theistic explanations for moral altruism, then moral altruism is evidence for theism.
- 5) So, moral altruism is evidence for theism.

# ALTRUISM: PRUSS

- Alexander Pruss, “Altruism, Normalcy, and God,” in Nowack and Coakley (eds.), *Evolution, Games, and God* (Harvard, 2013).

# **EXPERIENTIAL ARGUMENTS**

**"I was in perfect health: we were on our sixth day of [hiking], and in good training. ... I felt neither fatigue, hunger, nor thirst, and my state of mind was equally healthy. ... When all at once I experienced a feeling of being raised above myself, I felt the presence of God--I tell of the thing just as I was conscious of it--as if his goodness and his power were penetrating me altogether. The throb of emotion was so violent that I could barely tell the boys to pass on and not wait for me. I then sat down on a stone, unable to stand any longer, and my eyes overflowed with tears. I thanked God that in the course of my life he had taught me to know him, ... Then, slowly, the ecstasy left my heart; that is, I felt that God had withdrawn the communion which he had granted, and I was able to walk on, but very slowly, so strongly was I still possessed by the interior emotion. ... At bottom the expression most apt to render what I felt is this: God was present, though invisible; he fell under no one of my senses, yet my consciousness perceived him."**

**William James**

**“There was not a mere consciousness of something there, but fused in the central happiness of it, a startling awareness of some ineffable good. Not vague either, not like the emotional effect of some poem, or scene, or blossom, of music, but the sure knowledge of the close presence of a sort of mighty person, and after it went, the memory persisted as the one perception of reality. Everything else might be a dream, but not that.”**

**William James**

# ANALOGY WITH AESTHETIC EXPERIENCE

- 1) If aesthetic experiences of aesthetes justifies their aesthetic beliefs, the religious experiences of religious people justifies their religious beliefs.
- 2) The aesthetic experiences of aesthetes justifies their aesthetic beliefs.
- 3) So, the religious experiences of religious people justifies their religious beliefs.
- 4) So, religious experiences of God justifies belief in God.



# ANALOGY WITH AESTHETIC EXPERIENCE

- Gathered from C. F. Davis, *The Evidential Force of Religious Experience* (Oxford, 1989), pp. 67-70.

# HICK ON RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE

- 1) If widespread, consistent, and persistent religious experience of God is unreliable, so is our sense experience generally.
- 2) Our sense experience is not generally unreliable.
- 3) So, widespread, consistent, and persistent religious experience of God is not unreliable.
- 4) If widespread, consistent, and persistent religious experience of God is not unreliable, it is rational to believe God exists.
- 5) So, it is rational to believe God exists.

# HICK ON RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE

- John Hick, *An Interpretation of Religion* (Yale, 1989), ch. 13.

# SWINBURNE ON RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE

POC: If it seems to me that *p*, then I am *prima facie* justified in believing *p*.

- 1) It seems to me that God exists.
- 2) If seems to me that God exists, I am *prima facie* justified in believing God exists.
- 3) So, I am *prima facie* justified in believing God exists.

# SWINBURNE ON RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE

- Richard Swinburne, *The Existence of God* (Oxford, 2004), ch. 13.

# PLANTINGA ON PROPER BASICALITY

- 1) If belief in God is properly basic, I am justified in believing in God.
- 2) Belief in God is properly basic.
- 3) So, I am justified in believing in God.

# ALSTON ON PERCEIVING GOD 1

- 1) Perceptual experience is reliable.
- 2) Religious experience has the same basic epistemic structure as perceptual experience.
- 3) If religious experience has the same basic epistemic structure as perceptual experience, religious experience is reliable.
- 4) So, religious experience is reliable.
- 5) If religious experiences of God are reliable, they justify belief in God.
- 6) So, religious experiences of God justify belief in God.

# ALSTON ON PERCEIVING GOD 2

EDP: If  $p$  is formed on the basis of a socially established doxastic practice,  $p$  is *prima facie* justified.

- 1) If belief in God is formed on the basis of a socially established doxastic practice, belief in God is *prima facie* justified.
- 2) Belief in God is formed on the basis of a socially established doxastic practice
- 3) So, belief in God is *prima facie* justified.



# ALSTON ON PERCEIVING GOD

- William Alston, *Perceiving God* (Cornell, 1991).

# YANDELL ON RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE

- 1) Some people have experiences which seem to them to be of God.
- 2) If some of those peoples' experiences are not subject to defeaters, the occurrence of those experiences is evidence that God exists.
- 3) Some of those peoples' experiences are not subject to defeaters
- 4) So, the occurrence of those experiences is evidence that God exists.

# YANDELL ON RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE

- 5) If those experiences occur in various cultures, and at various times, to people of various backgrounds and socio-economic status, their evidential force is increased.
- 6) Those experiences occur in various cultures, and at various times, to people of various backgrounds and socio-economic status, their evidential force is increased.
- 7) So, the evidential force of those experiences is increased.

# YANDELL ON RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE

- Keith Yandell, *The Epistemology of Religious Experience* (Cambridge, 1994).

# ONTOMYSTICAL ARGUMENT

**Samkara's Principle: If it seems to  $S$  that  $p$ , we should presume  $p$  is possible.**

- 1) Mystics have experiences in which it seems to them God exists.**
- 2) If mystics have experiences in which it seems to them God exists, we should presume God possibly exists.**
- 3) So, we should presume God possibly exists.**
- 4) If we should presume God possibly exists, we should presume God exists.**
- 5) So, we should presume God exists.**

# ONTOMYSTICAL ARGUMENT

- Alexander Pruss, "Samkara's Principle and Two Ontomystical Arguments," *International Journal for Philosophy of Religion* 49 (2001), pp. 111-120.

# PERSONAL TRANSFORMATION

- 1) There are many people who believe God has promised to help them develop spiritually who then do develop spiritually.
- 2) If this phenomenon is widespread enough, it is evidence that God does help people develop spiritually (and so evidence for God's existence).
- 3) It is widespread enough.
- 4) So, this phenomenon is evidence of God's existence.

# PERSONAL TRANSFORMATION

- William Alston, "The Fulfillment of Promises as Evidence for Religious Belief," in Radcliffe and White (eds.), *Faith in Theory and Practice: Essays on Justifying Religious Belief* (Open Court, 1993), pp. 1-34.
- Michael Rota, *Taking Pascal's Wager* (IVP, 2016), chs. 13-15.



# NDEs AND RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE

- 1) If there is no good naturalistic explanation of some NDEs in which God is experienced, those NDEs justify belief in God.
- 2) There is no good naturalistic explanation of some NDEs in which God is experienced.
- 3) So, those NDEs justify belief in God.

# NDEs AND LIFE AFTER DEATH

- 1) If there is no good naturalistic explanation of some NDEs, then those NDEs are evidence for life after death.
- 2) There is no good naturalistic explanation of some NDEs.
- 3) So, some NDEs are evidence for life after death.
- 4) Evidence for life after death is also evidence for God's existence.
- 5) So, NDEs are evidence for God's existence.

# NDEs AND LIFE AFTER DEATH

- L. W. Bailey and J. Yates, *The Near-Death Experience: A Reader* (Routledge, 1996).
- Holden, et al (eds.), *The Handbook of Near-Death Experiences: Thirty Years of Investigation* (Praeger, 2009).
- J. M. Holden, *The Self Does Not Die* (IANDS, 2016).
- Gary Habermas, "Evidential Near-Death Experiences," in Loose, et al. (eds.), *The Blackwell Companion to Substance Dualism* (Blackwell, 2018), ch. 14.

# **ARGUMENTS FROM MIRACLES**

# PRELIMINARIES: HUME

Hume:  $\Pr(\text{testimony is unreliable}) \gg \Pr(\text{event is a miracle})$

**Mistake 1: Assumes miracles are intrinsically improbable.**

**Mistake 2: Doesn't factor in all relevant probabilities.**

**Mistake 3: Underestimates cumulative evidential power of multiple, independent testimonies.**

# GENERIC ARGUMENT FROM MIRACLE

- 1) If there is good evidence that E occurred as reported, E is justifiably taken to be a miracle.
- 2) If E is justifiably taken to be a miracle, then E is evidence of God's existence.
- 3) If there is good evidence that E occurred as reported, then E is evidence that God exists.
- 4) There is good evidence that E occurred as reported.
- 5) So, E is evidence that God exists.

# **HISTORICAL CANDIDATES FOR E: EXODUS**

**Kuzari Principle: A tradition is likely to be true if it is:**

- I. accepted by a nation;**
- II. describes a national experience of a previous generation;**
- III. expected to create a continuous national memory until tradition is in place;**
- IV. insulting to that nation;**
- V. makes universal, difficult a severe demands on that nation**

# **HISTORICAL CANDIDATES FOR E: EXODUS**

- 1) The Kuzari principle is true.**
- 2) If the Exodus is a tradition meets the criteria of the Kuzari principle, then it's likely true.**
- 3) The Exodus is a tradition meets the criteria of the Kuzari principle.**
- 4) So, the Exodus tradition is probable true.**



# **HISTORICAL CANDIDATE FOR E: EXODUS**

- 1) If there is good evidence that the Exodus events occurred as reported, the Exodus events are justifiably taken to be miracles.**
- 2) If the Exodus events are justifiably taken to be a miracles, then they are evidence of God's existence.**
- 3) If there is good evidence that the Exodus events occurred as reported, they are evidence that God exists.**
- 4) There is good evidence that the Exodus events occurred as reported.**
- 5) So, the Exodus events are evidence that God exists.**

# HISTORICAL CANDIDATE FOR E: EXODUS

- James K. Hoffmeier, *Israel in Egypt: The Evidence for the Authenticity of the Exodus Tradition* (Oxford, 1996);
- James K. Hoffmeier, *Ancient Israel in Sinai: The Evidence for the Authenticity of the Wilderness Tradition* (Oxford, 2005).
- Hoffmeier, et al. (eds.), *"Did I Not Bring Israel Out of Egypt?"* (Eisenbrauns, 2016).
- K. A. Kitchen, *On the Reliability of the Old Testament* (Eerdmans, 2003).
- Tyron Goldschmidt, "A Proof of Exodus," in Lebens, et al. (eds.), *Jewish Philosophy in an Analytic Age* (Oxford, 2019), ch. 12.

# **HISTORICAL CANDIDATES FOR E: SPECTACULAR EVENTS OF JESUS' MINISTRY**

- 1) If there is good evidence that the spectacular events of Jesus' ministry occurred as reported, they are justifiably taken to be miracles.
- 2) If the spectacular events of Jesus' ministry are justifiably taken to be a miracles, then they are evidence of God's existence.
- 3) If there is good evidence that the spectacular events of Jesus' ministry occurred as reported, they are evidence that God exists.
- 4) There is good evidence that the spectacular events of Jesus' ministry occurred as reported.
- 5) So, the Exodus events are evidence that God exists.

# HISTORICAL CANDIDATES FOR E: SPECTACULAR EVENTS OF JESUS' MINISTRY

- Craig Keener, *Miracles: The Credibility of the New Testament Accounts*, Vols. 1-2 (Baker, 2011).
- Craig Blomberg, *The Historical Reliability of the Gospels* (IVP, 2007).

# **HISTORICAL CANDIDATE FOR E: RESURRECTION**

**Historical Evidence (E1-En):**

**E1. Jesus' death**

**E2. Jesus' burial**

**E3. Empty tomb**

**E4. Testimony to appearances (women, disciples, Paul)**

**E5. Un-Jewishness of the claim**

**E6. Sabbath abruptly changed from Saturday to Sunday**

**E7. Rise of early church**

**E8. Martyrdom of the apostles**

**:**

**En. ...**

# **HISTORICAL CANDIDATE FOR E: RESURRECTION**

## **C-Inductive**

**Given E1-En, whether or not  $P(R) > .5$ ,  $P(R) \gg \sim P(R)$**

## **P-Inductive**

**Given E1-En,  $P(R) > .5$  or  $P(R) \gg .5$**

## **Best Explanation**

- 1) E1-En.**
- 2) R is the best explanation of E1-En.**
- 3) R entails God exists.**
- 4) So, probably, God exists.**

# **HISTORICAL CANDIDATES FOR E: RESURRECTION**

- 1) If there is good evidence that the resurrection occurred as reported, it justifiably taken to be a miracle.
- 2) If the resurrection is justifiably taken to be a miracles, it is evidence of God's existence.
- 3) If there is good evidence that the resurrection occurred as reported, it evidence that God exists.
- 4) There is good evidence that the resurrection occurred as reported.
- 5) So, the resurrection is evidence that God exists.

# HISTORICAL CANDIDATES FOR E: RESURRECTION

## C-Inductive

- Timothy and Lydia McGrew, "The Argument from Miracles: A Cumulative Case for the Resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth," in Craig and Moreland (eds.), *The Blackwell Companion to Natural Theology* (Blackwell, 2009), ch. 11.

## P-Inductive

- Richard Swinburne, *The Resurrection of God Incarnate* (Oxford, 2003).

## Best Explanation

- William Lane Craig, *Assessing the New Testament Evidence for the Historicity of the Resurrection of Jesus* (Edwin Mellon, 2002).
- N. T. Wright, *The Resurrection of the Son of God* (Fortress, 2003).
- Dale Allison, *Resurrecting Jesus* (T&T Clark, 2005).
- Michael Licona, *The Resurrection of Jesus: A New Historiographical Approach* (IVP, 2010).



# CONTEMPORARY CANDIDATES FOR E

## Contemporary Evidence (E1-En):

E1. Acts of providence

E2. Answered prayer

E3. Healings

E4. Stigmata

E5. Public object miracles

E6. Levitation

E7. Demonic possession, activity, exorcisms

E8. Angelic encounters

E9. Special divine knowledge

E10. Visions, dreams, premonitions, prophecy

**"I recognize that some genuine scholars will demur from my ... argument that some cases of supernatural causation are likely, as I myself once did. What I do not believe is intellectually legitimate is to simply dismiss on the basis of preexisting assumptions the sincerity of all the [hundreds of] millions of persons who claim to have witnessed such phenomena, or to insist that such claims could arise only gradually in legend or through a writer's imagination. Such insistence flies in the face of an extraordinary amount of evidence, denying voluminous and cross-cultural testimony merely on the basis of a dogmatic theory forged in a very different era and context. ... In view of even the very limited number of cases I have offered ..., I would consider such sweeping claims ... to be impossibly naïve and misinformed. ... Any finite number of firsthand observations may be technically anecdotal, but the witnesses are surely no more biased for believing that they have seen [apparently miraculous things] than are those who, not having seen them, deny that anyone else could have seen them either."**

**Craig Keener**

# CONTEMPORARY CANDIDATES FOR E

- Craig Keener, *Miracles: The Credibility of the New Testament Accounts*, Vols. 1-2 (Baker Academic, 2011).

**“It is worth noting that successful prophecy could be regarded as a form of miracle for which there could in principle be good evidence. If someone is reliably recorded as having prophesied at  $t_1$  an event at  $t_2$  which could not be predicted at  $t_1$  on any natural grounds, and the event occurs at  $t_2$ , then at any later time  $t_3$  we can assess the evidence for the claims both that the prophecy was made at  $t_1$  and that its accuracy cannot be explained either causally (for example, on the ground that it brought about its own fulfilment) or as accidental, and hence that it was probably miraculous.”**

**J. L. Mackie**

# FULFILLED PROPHECY AS MIRACLE

If an event foretold at  $t_1$  occurs at  $t_2$  that

- I. could not have been predicted by natural means,
- II. could not have been brought about because it was foretold,  
and
- III. Is highly unlikely to have occurred as foretold by chance,

Then there is fulfilled prophecy.

- 1) If there are cases of fulfilled prophecy, they are evidence of divine action.
- 2) There are cases of fulfilled prophecy.
- 3) So, such cases are evidence of divine action.

# FULFILLED PROPHECY AS MIRACLE 1

- 1) If the sacred texts of a religion contain many fulfilled prophecies, that is strong evidence for the truth of that religion.
- 2) The sacred texts of Christianity contain many fulfilled prophecies.
- 3) So, the sacred texts of Christianity are strong evidence for the truth of Christianity.

# FULFILLED PROPHECY AS MIRACLE 2

- 1) If the central claims of a religion are supported by fulfilled prophecies, that is strong evidence for the truth of that religion.
- 2) The central claims of Christianity are supported by fulfilled prophecies.
- 3) So, those fulfilled prophecies are strong evidence for the truth of Christianity.

# FULFILLED PROPHECY AS MIRACLE

- Robert Newman (ed.), *The Evidence of Prophecy* (Interdisciplinary Biblical Research Institute, 1998).
- Robert Newman, "Fulfilled Prophecy as Miracle," in Geivett and Habermas (eds.), *In Defense of Miracles* (IVP, 1997), ch.13.
- Lydia McGrew, "Probabilistic Issues Concerning Jesus of Nazareth and Messianic Death Prophecies," *Philosophia Christi* 15/2 (2013), pp. 85-102.
- Douglas Scott, *Is Jesus of Nazareth the Predicted Messiah?* (Wipf & Stock, 2018).



# **NONTRADITIONAL ARGUMENTS**

- VIII. METAPHYSICAL**
- IX. NOMOLOGICAL**
- X. AXIOLOGICAL**
- XI. NOOLOGICAL**
- XII. LINGUISTIC**
- XIII. ANTHROPOLOGICAL**
- XIV. META-ARGUMENTS**

# **METAPHYSICAL ARGUMENTS**

# ABSTRACT OBJECTS

- 1) Some abstract objects exist necessarily.
- 2) Abstract objects depend for their existence on concrete objects.
- 3) So, at least one concrete object exists necessarily.

# ABSTRACT OBJECTS

- E. J. Lowe, “A New Modal Version of the Ontological Argument,” in Szatkowski (ed.), *Ontological Proofs Today* (Ontos Verlag, 2012), ch. 8.
- Similar argument in Joshua Rasmussen and Alexander Pruss, *Necessary Existence* (Oxford, 2018), ch. 7.

# FESER'S AUGUSTINIAN PROOF

- 1) Abstract objects exist.
- 2) If abstract objects exist, either Platonic realism is true, Aristotelian realism is true, or Scholastic realism is true.
- 3) Platonic realism and Aristotelian realism are false.
- 4) So, Scholastic realism is true.
- 5) If Scholastic realism is true, abstract objects exist in a necessarily existent intellect.
- 6) So, there is a necessarily existent intellect.

# FESER'S AUGUSTINIAN PROOF

- Edward Feser, *Five Proofs of the Existence of God* (Ignatius, 2017), ch. 3.
- Greg Welty, "Theistic Conceptual Realism," in Gould (ed.), *Beyond the Control of God?* (Bloomsbury, 2014), ch. 3.

# LOWE ON OBJECTS OF REASON

- 1) If objects of reason exist, they are nonphysical, necessarily existent, and infinite in number.
- 2) If objects of reason are nonphysical, necessarily existent, and infinite in number, they are best explained by a nonphysical, necessarily existent, infinite intellect.
- 3) Objects of reason exist.
- 4) So, probably, there is a nonphysical, necessarily existent, infinite intellect.

# LOWE ON OBJECTS OF REASON

- E. J. Lowe, "Naturalism, Theism, and Objects of Reason," *Philosophia Christi* 15/1 (2013), pp. 35-45.



# PROPOSITIONS

- 1) Propositions are distinctively thought-like.
- 2) If propositions are distinctively thought-like, they are the thoughts of a necessary, infinite mind.
- 3) So, propositions are the thoughts of a necessary, infinite mind.

# PROPOSITIONS

- Quentin Smith, "A Conceptualist Argument for God's Existence," *Faith and Philosophy* 11/1 (1994), pp. 38-49.
- James Anderson and Greg Welty, "The Lord of Non-Contradiction: An Argument for God from Logic," *Philosophia Christi* 13/2 (2011), pp. 321-338.
- Richard Davis, "God and the Platonic Horde: A Defense of Limited Conceptualism," *Philosophia Christi* 13/2 (2011), pp. 289-303.
- Lorraine Keller, "Against Naturalized Cognitive Propositions," *Erkenntnis* 82/4 (2017), pp. 929-946.
- Lorraine Keller, "The Argument from Intentionality (or Aboutness): Propositions Supernaturalized," in Walls & Dougherty (eds.), *Two Dozen (or so) Arguments for God* (Oxford, 2018), pp. 11-28.

# SETS

- 1) **Sets exist and have a certain nature: they are (i) non-self-membered, (ii) have their members essentially, and (iii) collectively form an iterated structure.**
- 2) **Either set-theoretic realism is true or activism is true.**
- 3) **Activism explains the existence and nature of sets better than set-theoretic realism ((iii) in particular).**
- 4) **So, the existence and nature of sets confirms activism over set-theoretic realism.**
- 5) **If activism is true then there's probably an infinite intellect.**
- 6) **So, the existence and nature of sets confirms the existence of an infinite intellect.**

# SETS

**S = Sets exist and have a certain nature.**

**STR = Set-theoretic realism**

**A = Activism: sets are the product of intellectual activity**

**I = An infinite intellect exists**

- 1)  $P(\text{STR}) + P(\text{A}) = 1$  (either STR or A)**
- 2)  $P(\text{S} | \text{A}) > P(\text{S} | \text{STR})$**
- 3) So, S confirms A.**
- 4) The best explanation of A is I.**
- 5) So, S confirms I.**

# SETS

- Christopher Menzel, "The Argument from Collections," in Walls & Dougherty (eds.), *Two Dozen (or so) Arguments for God* (Oxford, 2018), pp. 29-58.

# UNITIES: FACTS

- 1) Facts exist and are unities of constituents.
- 2) Facts can be unities of constituents only if there is an external fact-unifier.
- 3) Some fact or other exists in every possible world.
- 4) If some fact or other exists in every possible world, there must be an external fact-unifier in every possible world.
- 5) So, there is an external fact-unifier in every possible world.
- 6) The only thing that can be an external fact-unifier in every possible world is a mind.
- 7) So, there is a fact-unifying mind in every possible world.

# UNITIES: FACTS

- William Vallicella, "From Facts to God: An Onto-Cosmological Argument," *International Journal for Philosophy of Religion* 48/3 (2000), pp. 157-181

# UNITIES: CONTINGENTS

- 1) All contingent beings are composite and temporal.
- 2) There is nothing intrinsic to contingent being that explains what holds them together through time.
- 3) That which explains what holds contingent beings together through time cannot be other contingent beings.
- 4) So, that which explains what holds contingent beings together though time must be a necessary, incomposite, atemporal, sustaining case.



# UNITIES: CONTINGENTS

- David Braine, *The Reality of Time and the Existence of God* (Oxford, 1988).

# UNITIES: WHOLES

- 1) If x is a whole, then x is made by an intelligent agent.
- 2) Some wholes cannot be made by embodied agents.
- 3) So, some wholes made by intelligent agents are not made by embodied agents.
- 4) Some wholes made by an intelligent, unembodied agent require that agent to be God-like.
- 5) So, there a God-like, intelligent, unembodied agent exists.

# UNITIES: WHOLES

- J. Kronen and S. Menssen, "The Argument from Wholes: A Classical Hindu Design Argument for the Existence of God," *Faith and Philosophy* 30/2 (2013), pp. 138-158.

# UNITIES: THE COSMOS

- 1) The unity of the cosmos requires explanation.
- 2) If the unity of the cosmos is explained by something internal to it, it is explained either by its parts or by natural laws.
- 3) The unity of the cosmos cannot be explained by its parts or by natural laws.
- 4) So, the unity of the cosmos cannot be explained by something internal to it.
- 5) So, the unity of the cosmos must be explained by something external to it.
- 6) Whatever external to the cosmos that explains its unity must be timeless, immaterial, powerful, and plausibly a mind.

# UNITIES: THE COSMOS

- Paulo Juarez, "From the Unity of the World to God: A Teleo-Cosmological Argument for God's Existence," *Scientia et Fides* 5/2 (2017), pp. 283-303.

# LIMITS

- 1) Whatever is limited has an explanation.
- 2) If whatever is limited has an explanation, then, possibly, something is unlimited.
- 3) So, possibly, something is unlimited.
- 4) If something is unlimited, then it is perfect.
- 5) If something is perfect, it is necessary.
- 6) So, if something is unlimited, it is necessary. (4, 5)
- 7) If, possibly, something is unlimited, then there is something that is perfect and necessary (5, 6)
- 8) So, there is something that is perfect and necessary. (3, 7)

# LIMITS

- Joshua Rasmussen, *How Reason Can Lead to God* (IVP, 2019).

# APPLICABILITY OF MATHEMATICS

- 1) The applicability of mathematics to the physical world requires explanation.
- 2) The best explanation of the applicability of mathematics to the physical world is that God modeled the physical world in accordance with mathematical structures.
- 3) So, the applicability of mathematics to the physical world is evidence of God's existence.



# APPLICABILITY OF MATHEMATICS

- Eugene Wigner, "The Unreasonable Effectiveness of Mathematics in the Natural Sciences," *Communications on Pure and Applied Mathematics* 13/1 (1960), pp. 1-14.
- Mark Steiner, *The Applicability of Mathematics as a Philosophical Problem* (Harvard, 1998).
- William Lane Craig, "God and the Applicability of Mathematics," in Ruloff and Horban (ed.), *Contemporary Arguments in Natural Theology* (Bloomsbury, 2021), pp.##.

# GLOBAL ECONOMY ARGUMENT

- 1) We should accept the best theory of abstracta.
- 2) The best theory of abstracta will secure the virtues of both anti-realism (economic) and realism (necessity and objectivity).
- 3) Only theism can secure the virtues of both anti-realism (economic) and realism (necessity and objectivity) about abstracta.
- 4) So, theism provides the best theory of abstracta.
- 5) So, we should accept theism.

# GLOBAL ECONOMY ARGUMENT

- Brian Leftow, *God and Necessity* (Oxford, 2012).

# ARGUMENT FROM MODALITY

- 1) Modalities are grounded in powers.
- 2) Modalities can be grounded in powers only if they are grounded in the powers of an omnipotent being.
- 3) So, modalities are grounded in the powers of an omnipotent being.

# ARGUMENT FROM MODALITY

- Brian Leftow, "The Argument from Possibility," in Walls & Dougherty (eds.), *Two Dozen (or so) Arguments for God* (Oxford, 2018), pp. 406-416.

# **NOMOLOGICAL ARGUMENTS**

# **LAWS AS COUNTERFACTUALS OF**

- 1) Laws of nature are (i) prior to that which they describe, and (ii) subjunctive in structure.
- 2) The best explanation of laws of nature being this way is that they are counterfactuals of freedom.
- 3) So, probably, laws of nature are counterfactuals of freedom.
- 4) Laws of nature can be counterfactuals of freedom only if they are counterfactuals of freedom of a transcendent agent with an absolutely stable character who governs the relevant parts of reality.
- 5) So, probably, there is a transcendent agent with an absolutely stable character who governs the relevant parts of reality.

# LAWS AS COUNTERFACTUALS OF DIVINE FREEDOM

- Peter Ratzke, "Conditional (re-)signification," *Faith and Philosophy* 4/4 (1987), pp. 383-402.



# A SCHOLASTIC ARGUMENT

- 1) Natural laws exist and are (i) transcendent yet (ii) immanent.
- 2) Natural laws can be (i) transcendent yet (ii) immanent only if they are grounded in a transcendent yet immanent being.
- 3) So, natural laws are grounded in a transcendent yet immanent being.
- 4) If there is a transcendent yet immanent being, it's God.
- 5) So, God exists.

# A SCHOLASTIC ARGUMENT

- John Peterson, "Law and Thomistic Exemplarism," *The Thomist* 60/1 (1996), pp. 81-108.

# FROM INDUCTION TO LAWS TO GOD

- 1) Induction is justified.
- 2) Induction is justified only if there is genuine regularity of nature.
- 3) There can be genuine regularity of nature only if there are natural laws governing nature.
- 4) So, there are natural laws governing nature.
- 5) The best explanation of there being natural laws governing nature is if God created them and imposes them on nature.
- 6) So, probably, God exists.

# FROM INDUCTION TO LAWS TO GOD

- John Foster, *The Divine Lawmaker: Lectures on Induction, Laws of Nature, and the Existence of God* (Oxford, 2004).

# FROM INDUCTION TO GOD

- 1) We're justified in believing induction is reliable.
- 2) We're justified in believing induction is reliable only if we're justified in believing the universe started in a low-entropy state.
- 3) We're justified in believing the universe started in a low-entropy state only if theism is true.
- 4) So, we're justified in believing induction is reliable only if theism is true.
- 5) So, theism is true.

# FROM INDUCTION TO GOD

- **Bradley Monton, “Atheistic Induction by Boltzmann Brains,”** in Walls and Dougherty (eds.), *Two Dozen (or so) Arguments for God* (Oxford, 2018), pp. 184-197.

# **SIMPLICITY OF DIVINE LAWS**

- 1) The best naturalistic theory of the laws of nature are that they are determination relations between properties.**
- 2) If laws of nature are determination relations between properties, there are two fundamentally different kinds of causation--event causation and agent causation.**
- 3) All else being equal, we should prefer simpler theories to more complex theories.**
- 4) If laws of nature are regularities imposed on nature by God, there is just one kind of causation--agent causation.**
- 5) So, all else being equal, we should prefer the theistic theory of laws of nature to the naturalistic theory.**

# SIMPLICITY OF DIVINE LAWS

- Richard Swinburne, "Relations Between Universals, or Divine Laws?" *Australasian Journal of Philosophy* 84/2 (2006), pp. 179-189.



# FROM THE INCOMPLETENESS OF NATURE

- 1) There is genuine ontic indeterminacy.
- 2) Material objects are not radically ontologically incomplete.
- 3) If there is genuine ontic indeterminacy, material objects can be ontologically complete only if something more fundamental than matter completes them.
- 4) So, material objects can be ontologically complete only if something more fundamental than matter completes them.
- 5) So, something more fundamental than matter completes material objects.
- 6) The only thing that could be more fundamental than matter that could complete material objects is a God-like mind.
- 7) So, a God-like mind exists.

# FROM THE INCOMPLETENESS OF NATURE

- Bruce Gordon, "The Necessity of Sufficiency: The Argument from the Incompleteness of Nature," in Walls and Dougherty (eds.), *Two Dozen (or so) Arguments for God* (Oxford, 2018), pp. 417-445.

# **AXIOLOGICAL ARGUMENTS**

# AQUINAS' FOURTH WAY

- 1) Things are more or less good, true, noble, etc.
- 2) Things are more or less good, true, noble, etc. only if they are so by resemblance to something maximally good, true, noble, etc.
- 3) So, there is something maximally good, true, noble, etc.
- 4) If there is something maximally good, true, noble, etc., it's God.
- 5) So, God exists.

# THE DEONTIC ARGUMENT

**Axiarchic Principle: If  $x$  ought to exist,  $x$  exists.**

- 1) God ought to exist.**
- 2) If God ought to exist, God exists.**
- 3) So, God exists.**

# THE DEONTIC ARGUMENT

- John Leslie, *Value and Existence* (Blackwell, 1979).

# THE MODAL DEONTIC ARGUMENT

Modal Axiarchic Principle: If  $x$  ought to exist,  $x$  possibly exists.

- 1) God ought to exist.
- 2) If God ought to exist, God possibly exists.
- 3) So, God possibly exists.
- 4) If God possibly exists, God exists.
- 5) So, God exists.

# THE MODAL DEONTIC ARGUMENT

- Carl Kordig, "A Deontic Argument for God's Existence," *Nous* 15/2 (1981), pp. 207-208.
- William Vallicella, "Does God Exist Because He Ought to Exist?" in Szatkowski (ed.), *Ontology of Theistic Beliefs* (De Gruyter, 2018), pp. 205-212.



# OBJECTIVE BEAUTY

- 1) There is objective beauty.
- 2) Objective beauty is more likely if theism is true than if naturalism is true.
- 3) So, objective beauty is evidence for theism over naturalism.

**“How ugly the stars are tonight! How trivial the pounding of the waves on the beach! And is it not crass to be thrilled by mountains? The rain forest and the wild-flowers are quite repulsive. And as for sunsets...’. If a full-blown relativism in aesthetics was correct, then those responses would be unusual but not in any way improper. But my reaction is that anyone who fails to appreciate the beauty of this universe is defective.”**

**- Peter Forrest**

# OBJECTIVE BEAUTY

- Phillip Tallon, "The Mozart Argument and the Argument from Play and Enjoyment: The Theistic Argument from Beauty and Play," in Walls & Dougherty (eds.), *Two Dozen (or so) Arguments for God* (Oxford, 2018), pp. 321-340.
- Doug Geivett and James Spiegel, "Beauty: A Troubling Reality for the Scientific Naturalist," in Copan & Taliaferro (eds.), *The Naturalness of Belief: New Essays on Theism's Rationality* (Lexington Books, 2019), pp. 141-157.
- Eddy Zamach, *Real Beauty* (Pennsylvania University Press, 1997).

# AESTHETIC SENSIBILITIES

- 1) We have natural and sophisticated aesthetic sensibilities.
- 2) That we have natural and sophisticated aesthetic sensibilities is more likely if theism is true than if naturalism is true.
- 3) So, that we have natural and sophisticated aesthetic sensibilities is evidence for theism over naturalism.

# **NATURAL BEAUTY AS PRODUCT OF AESTHETIC INTENT**

- 1) If x is beautiful, x is likely the product of aesthetic intent.**
- 2) The natural world is (in general) beautiful.**
- 3) So, the natural world is likely the product of aesthetic intent.**
- 4) If the natural world is the product of aesthetic intent, it's the product of the aesthetic intent of a God-like being.**
- 5) So, probably, the world is the product of the aesthetic intent of a God-like being.**

# NATURAL BEAUTY AS PRODUCT OF AESTHETIC INTENT

- F. R. Tennant, *Philosophical Theology*, Vol. 2 (Cambridge, 1930).
- Mark Wynn, *God and Goodness: A Natural Theological Perspective* (Routledge, 1999).

# NATURAL BEAUTY AS A GIFT

- 1) Natural beauty gives the resilient impression of being a gift.
- 2) If natural beauty gives the resilient impression of being a gift, we're justified in believing it is a gift.
- 3) So, we're justified in believing natural beauty is a gift.
- 4) If natural beauty is a gift, it can only be the gift of a transcendent, benevolent giver.
- 5) So, we're justified in believing natural beauty is the gift of a transcendent, benevolent giver.

# NATURAL BEAUTY AS A GIFT

- Peter Forrest, *God Without the Supernatural: A Defense of Scientific Theism* (Cornell, 1996).
- Ryan West and Adam Pelsner, “Perceiving God Through Natural Beauty,” *Faith and Philosophy* 32/3 (2015), pp. 293-312.



# NATURAL BEAUTY AS A NATURAL SIGN

- 1) Natural signs justify belief in the reality of what they signify.
- 2) Natural beauty is a natural sign.
- 3) Natural beauty signifies concepts of and beliefs about God.
- 4) So, natural beauty justified belief in the reality of God.

# NATURAL BEAUTY AS A NATURAL SIGN

- Ryan West and Adam Pelsner, “Perceiving God Through Natural Beauty,” *Faith and Philosophy* 32/3 (2015), pp. 293-312.

# BEAUTY IN MATHEMATICS

- 1) Mathematical theories inspired by aesthetic impulses often successfully apply to the physical world.
- 2) That mathematical theories inspired by aesthetic impulses often successfully apply to the physical world is more likely if theism is true than if naturalism is true.
- 3) So, the fact that mathematical theories inspired by aesthetic impulses often successfully apply to the physical world is evidence for theism over naturalism.

**“In a beautiful mathematical theory, there is certainly the inevitable. A theorem marches on towards a conclusion that seems undeniable. But how can something inevitable also be unexpected? The answer lies in the proof of a theorem itself. A beautiful proof has, in its core, ideas that take the reader by surprise, almost like a series of brilliant moves in a chess match. And the surprises, when put in context, become stunningly beautiful. A good poem has that same effect. The pattern of words forms a symphony that contains many surprises to be sure, but when heard, seems paradoxically inevitable in that it had to be stated the way it was. [According to some], the theories in mathematics most ‘important’ are precisely the ones that satisfy these aesthetic standards.”**

**- Russell Howell**

# BEAUTY IN MATHEMATICS

- Wigner and Steiner (op cit.).
- Russell Howell, “Does Mathematical Beauty Pose Problems for Naturalism?” *Christian Scholar’s Review* 35/4 (2006), pp. 493-504.

# INHERENT VALUE/WORTH

- 1) Human persons have inherent value/worth.
- 2) The fact that human persons have inherent value/worth is much more likely if theism is true than if naturalism is true.
- 3) So, the fact that human persons have value/worth is strong evidence for theism over naturalism.

# INHERENT VALUE/WORTH

- Mark Linville, "The Moral Argument," in Craig and Moreland (eds.), *The Blackwell Companion to Natural Theology* (Blackwell, 2009), ch. 7.
- David Baggett and Jerry Walls, *God and Cosmos: Moral Truth and Human Meaning* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016), ch. 4.

# EQUAL WORTH

- 1) All humans have equal worth.
- 2) All humans can have equal worth only if there is something all humans have in common in virtue of which they have equal worth.
- 3) So, there is something all humans have in common in virtue of which we have equal worth.
- 4) If naturalism is true, there is nothing all humans have in common in virtue of which we have equal worth.
- 5) So, naturalism is false.
- 6) If there is something all humans have in common in virtue of which we have equal worth, God is the best explanation of that.
- 7) So, God is the best explanation of all humans having equal worth.



# EQUAL WORTH

- J. P. Moreland, *The Recalcitrant Imago Dei* (SCM, 2009), ch. 6.

# NATURAL RIGHTS

- 1) Humans have natural rights.
- 2) Humans have natural rights only if humans have inherent and equal worth.
- 3) The best explanation of humans having inherent and equal worth is that that status is bestowed on them as an honor from a proper authority.
- 4) The only proper authority that could bestow inherent and equal worth as an honor on all humans is God.
- 5) So, probably, God exists.

# NATURAL RIGHTS

- Nicholas Wolterstorff, "On Secular and Theistic Groundings of Human Rights," and "Grounding the Rights we Have as Human Persons" in *Understanding Liberal Democracy: Essays in Political Philosophy*, ed. Terence Cuneo (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), chs. 7 and 8, respectively.
- John Warwick Montgomery, *Human Rights and Human Dignity* (Zondervan, 1986)
- Angus Menuge (ed.), *Legitimizing Human Rights* (Ashgate, 2013).

# **NOOLOGICAL ARGUMENTS**

# THINKING THINGS

- 1) There has always been something in existence.
- 2) Everything is either a thinking thing or an unthinking thing.
- 3) There are now thinking things.
- 4) Thinking things cannot be produced by nonthinking things.
- 5) So, there has always been at least one thinking thing.
  
- 6) Thinking things cannot be produced by other thinking things ad infinitum.
- 7) So, all thinking things must be produced by a thinking thing that has always existed.

# THINKING THINGS

- John Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*.
- Critical discussion in Oppy, *Arguing About Gods* (Oxford, 2006), pp. 382-385.

# PSYCHOPHYSICAL LAWS

- 1) Mental states are connected to brain states by psychophysical laws.
- 2) The existence of psychophysical laws is much more probable if theism is true than if naturalism is true.
- 3) So, psychophysical laws are strong evidence for theism over naturalism.

# PSYCHOPHYSICAL LAWS

- Robert Adams, “Flavors, Colors, and God,” in Adams, *The Virtue of Faith* (Oxford, 1987), ch. 16.
- Richard Swinburne, *The Existence of God* (Oxford, 2004), ch. 9.
- Richard Swinburne, “The Argument from Flavors and Colors,” in Walls and Dougherty (eds.), *Two Dozen (or so) Arguments for God* (Oxford, 2018), pp. 293-303.



# NONPHYSICAL CONSCIOUS STATES

- 1) Nonphysical mental states exist.
- 2) The explanation for the existence of nonphysical mental states is either scientific or personal.
- 3) The explanation for the existence of nonphysical mental states cannot be scientific.
- 4) So, the explanation for the existence of nonphysical mental states is personal.
- 5) If the explanation for the existence of nonphysical mental states is personal, then it is theistic.
- 6) So, the explanation for the existence of nonphysical mental states is theistic.

# NONPHYSICAL CONSCIOUS STATES

- J. P. Moreland, *Consciousness and the Existence of God* (Routledge, 2008).

# CONSCIOUSNESS PER SE

- 1) **Consciousness exists.**
- 2) **Given the laws of nature, the existence of consciousness is very unlikely if naturalism is true but very likely if theism is true.**
- 3) **So, given the laws of nature, the existence of consciousness is strong evidence for theism over naturalism.**

# CONSCIOUSNESS PER SE

- Ben Page, "Arguing to Theism from Consciousness," *Faith and Philosophy* 37/3 (2020), pp. 336-362.

**“Assuming the necessity of food for the support of animal life; it is requisite, that the animal be provided with organs, fitted for the procuring, receiving, and digesting of its food. It may be also necessary, that the animal be impelled by its sensations to exert its organs. But the pain of hunger would do all this. Why add pleasure to the act of eating; sweetness and relish to food? Why a new and appropriate sense for the perception of the pleasure? Why should the juice of a peach, applied to the palate, affect the part so differently from what it does when rubbed upon the palm of the hand? This is a constitution which, so far as appears to me, can be resolved into nothing but the pure benevolence of the Creator. Eating is necessary; but the pleasure attending it is not necessary: and that this pleasure depends, not only upon our being in possession of the sense of taste, which is different from every other, but upon a particular state of the organ in which it resides, a felicitous adaptation of the organ to the object, will be confessed by any one, who may happen to have experienced that vitiation of taste which frequently occurs in fevers, when every taste is irregular, and every one bad.”**

**- William Paley**

# GRATUITOUS PLEASURES

- 1) If there are pleasures that are gratuitous given naturalism but expected on theism, they are evidence for theism over naturalism.
- 2) There are pleasures that are gratuitous given naturalism but expected on theism.
- 3) So, those pleasures are evidence for theism over naturalism.

# GRATUITOUS PLEASURES

- William Paley, *Natural Theology* (Cambridge, 1803; ed. 2009), pp. 518-519.

# INTELLIGIBILITY OF THE WORLD

- 1) There is no plausible naturalistic aetiology of the intelligibility intuition, such that we have the intuition because it's true.
- 2) If (1), naturalists ought to withhold either the intelligibility intuition, or naturalism.
- 3) One should not withhold the intelligibility intuition.
- 4) So, naturalists ought to withhold their belief in naturalism.
- 5) There are plausible theistic aetiologies of the intelligibility intuition, such that we have the intuition because it's true.
- 6) So, the intelligibility intuition is evidence for theism over naturalism.



# INTELLIGIBILITY OF THE WORLD

- Christophe de Ray, "A New Epistemological Case for Theism," *Religious Studies* (2021).
- Robert Koons, "The General Argument from Intuition," in Walls and Dougherty (eds.), *Two Dozen (or so) Arguments for God* (Oxford, 2018), pp. 238-257.

# ARGUMENT FROM REASON

- 1) Reason involves intentionality and mental causation.
- 2) Intentionality and mental causation can only have a personal explanation.
- 3) So, reason can only have a personal explanation.
- 4) If reason can have only a personal explanation, the best explanation is theistic.
- 5) So, the best explanation of reason is theistic.

# ARGUMENT FROM REASON

- James Ross, "Immaterial Aspects of Thought," *The Journal of Philosophy* 89 (1992), pp. 136-150.
- William Hasker, *The Emergent Self* (Cornell, 1999).
- William Hasker, "What is Naturalism? And Should We Be Naturalists?" *Philosophia Christi* 15/1 (2013), pp. 21-34.
- Victor Reppert, "The Argument from Reason," in Craig and Moreland (eds.), *The Blackwell Companion to Natural Theology* (Blackwell, 2009), ch. 6.
- Stuart Goetz, "The Argument from Reason," *Philosophia Christi* 15/1 (2013), pp. 47-62.

# NATURALNESS OF THEISTIC BELIEF

**SD = Disposition to form beliefs in supernatural agency.**

**T = Theism**

**N = Naturalism**

- 1)  $\text{Pr}(\text{SD} | \text{T}) \gg \text{Pr}(\text{SD} | \text{N})$ .**
- 2) If  $\text{Pr}(\text{SD} | \text{T}) \gg \text{Pr}(\text{SD} | \text{N})$ , then SD confirms T over N.**
- 3) So, SD confirms T over N.**

# NATURALNESS OF THEISTIC BELIEF

- Matthew Braddock, "An Evidential Argument for Theism from Cognitive Science of Religion," in van Eyghen, et al. (eds.), *New Developments in the Cognitive Science of Religion: The Rationality of Religious Belief* (Springer, 2018), pp. 71-98.
- Justin Barrett, *Why Would Anyone Believe in God?* (AltaMira Press, 2004).
- Justin Barrett, *Born Believers* (Free Press, 2012).

# CERTAINTY

- 1) We have strongly certain beliefs about (and knowledge of) mathematical objects.
- 2) If  $S$  knows  $p$ , there is a causal explanation connecting the knower to the object known.
- 3) So, there is a causal explanation connecting us and mathematical objects.
- 4) Only a God-like being can provide a causal explanation for our strongly certain beliefs about mathematical objects.
- 5) So, a God-like being exists.

# CERTAINTY

- Katherine Rogers, "Evidence for God from Certainty," *Faith and Philosophy* 25/1 (2008), pp. 31-46.

# KNOWLEDGE AS PROPER FUNCTION

- 1) We have knowledge.
- 2) We can have knowledge only if our cognitive faculties function properly.
- 3) Our cognitive faculties have a proper function only if they are designed.
- 4) So, our cognitive faculties are designed.
- 5) If our cognitive faculties are designed, then probably, God exists.
- 6) So, probably, God exists.



# KNOWLEDGE AS PROPER FUNCTION

- Alvin Plantinga, *Warrant and Proper Function* (Oxford, 1993).
- Kenny Boyce and Andrew Moon, "In Defense of Proper Functionalism: Cognitive Science Takes on Swampman," *Synthese* 193/9 (2016), pp. 2987-3001.
- Tyler McNabb, *Religious Epistemology* (Cambridge, 2018).
- Justin Barrett, "The Argument from Positive Epistemic Status," in Walls and Dougherty (eds.), *Two Dozen (or so) Arguments for God* (Oxford, 2018), pp. 159-169.

# EPISTEMIC PROBABILITY

- 1) The best account of epistemic probability concerns what is permissible for a person with properly functioning cognitive faculties to believe in the circumstances they're in.
- 2) Our cognitive faculties have a proper function only if they are designed.
- 3) So, our cognitive faculties are designed.
- 4) If our cognitive faculties are designed, then probably, God exists.
- 5) So, probably, God exists.

# EPISTEMIC PROBABILITY

- Richard Otte, "A Theistic Conception of Probability," in Beatty (ed.), *Christian Theism and the Problems of Philosophy* (Notre Dame, 1990), pp. 92-117.

# RELIABILITY OF OUR COGNITIVE FACULTIES

R = Our cognitive faculties are generally reliable.

T = Theism

N = Naturalism

- 1)  $\Pr(R|T) \gg$  really low.
- 2)  $\Pr(R|N) =$  really low.
- 3) So,  $\Pr(R|T) \gg \Pr(R|N)$ .
- 4) If  $\Pr(R|T) \gg \Pr(R|N)$ , then R confirms T over N.
- 5) So, R confirms T over N.

# RELIABILITY OF OUR COGNITIVE FACULTIES

- Alexander Arnold, "The Argument from the Confluence of Proper Function and Reliability," in Walls and Dougherty (eds.), *Two Dozen (or so) Arguments for God* (Oxford, 2018), pp. 170-183.
- Jim Slagle, *The Evolutionary Argument Against Naturalism: Context Exposition, and Repercussions* (Bloomsbury, 2021).

# ANTI-REALISM

- 1) If realism is true but God does not exist, radical skepticism is true.
- 2) Radical skepticism is false.
- 3) So, either realism is false or God exists (1, 2)
- 4) Realism is true.
- 5) So, God exists. (3, 4)

# ANTI-REALISM

- Alvin Plantinga, "How to be an Anti-Realist," *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Association* 56/1 (1982), pp. 47-70.
- Michael Rea, "Theism and Epistemic Truth-Equivalences," *Nous* 34/2 (2000), pp. 291-301.
- Michael Dummett, *Thought and Reality* (Oxford, 2006).
- W. J. Mander, "On Arguing for the Existence of God as a Synthesis between Realism and Anti-Realism," *International Journal for Philosophy of Religion* 74/1 (2013), pp. 99-115.

# IDEALISM

- 1) Every thing has an intrinsic, non-relational quality.
- 2) Only conscious states have intrinsic, non-relational qualities.
- 3) So, every thing has a conscious quality.
- 4) The best explanation of how every thing can have a conscious quality is that everything is (at least partly) constituted by God's mind.
- 5) So, probably, God exists.



# IDEALISM

- George Berkeley, *Three Dialogues between Hylas and Philonous*.
- Robert Adams, "Idealism Vindicated," in Van Inwagen and Zimmerman (eds.), *Persons: Human and Divine* (Oxford, 2007), ch. 1.
- Hugh Hunter, "George Berkeley's Proof for the Existence of God," *International Journal for Philosophy of Religion* 78/2 (2015), pp. 183-193).
- James Spiegel, "Idealism and the Reasonableness of Theistic Belief," in Cowan and Spiegel (eds.), *Idealism and Christian Philosophy* (Bloomsbury, 2016), ch. 1.

# KNOWABILITY: FITCH-STYLE PROOF

- 1) For any proposition  $p$ , if  $p$ , then it's possible someone knows  $p$ .
- 2) If (1), then for any proposition  $p$ , there is someone who knows  $p$ .
- 3) If (2), then there is someone who knows every truth.
- 4) So, there is someone who knows every truth.

# KNOWABILITY: FITCH-STYLE PROOF

- John Bigelow, "Omnificence," *Analysis* 65/3 (2005), pp. 187-196.

# MODAL EPISTEMIC ARGUMENT

- 1) For any proposition  $p$ , if  $p$  is possibly true then  $p$  is knowable.
- 2) The proposition 'God does not exist' is not knowable.
- 3) Therefore, the proposition 'God does not exist' is not possibly true.
- 4) So, the proposition 'God exists' is necessarily true.

# MODAL EPISTEMIC ARGUMENT

- Emanuel Rutten, "A Modal-Epistemic Argument for the Existence of God," *Faith and Philosophy* 31/4 (2014), pp. 386–400.

# LINGUISTIC ARGUMENTS

# CONCEPT ACQUISITION

- 1) Human *S* has concepts.
- 2) *S* can have concepts only if *S* has the innate ability to acquire concepts and does so with the linguistic help of a linguistic community.
- 3) Those within the linguistic community who help *S* acquire concepts also acquired concepts from the help of others in the linguistic community.
- 4) There cannot be an infinite regress of humans helping other humans acquire concepts.
- 5) So, there must be a non-human being with innate concepts outside the linguistic community of humans who initiates the series of humans helping other humans acquire concepts.

# CONCEPT ACQUISITION

- J. J. C. Smart and J. J. Haldane, *Atheism and Theism* (Blackwell, 1996).



# LINGUISTIC ABILITY

- 1) Humans innately have very sophisticated linguistic abilities.
- 2) The best explanation for humans innately having very sophisticated linguistic abilities is that God endows them with such.
- 3) So, probably, God exists.

# LINGUISTIC ABILITY

- Jeffrey Johnson and Joyclynn Potter, "The Argument from Language and the Existence of God," *Journal of Religion* 85/1 (2005), pp. 83-93.

# SEMANTIC CONTENT

- 1) Radical skepticism is false (we have knowledge)
- 2) Radical skepticism is false only if semantic content can serve as an anchor for successful reference (and hence, knowledge).
- 3) Semantic content can serve as an anchor for successful reference only if it is (i) independent of finite minds, (ii) modally and temporally stable, (iii) infinitary, (iv) normative, and (v) objective.
- 4) But semantic content can be (i)-(v) only if it has a transcendent ground.
- 5) If semantic has a transcendent ground, it's probably God.
- 6) So, probably, God exists

# SEMANTIC CONTENT

- Daniel Bonevac, “Arguments from Knowledge, Reference, and Content,” in Walls and Dougherty (eds.), *Two Dozen (or so) Arguments for God* (Oxford, 2018), pp. 215-237.

# FALSITY OF SEMANTIC INDETERMINISM

- 1) Semantic facts are objective and mind-dependent.
- 2) So, the semantic facts underlying context-sensitive language are objective and mind-dependent.
- 3) The semantic facts underlying context-sensitive language can be objective and mind-dependent only if they're grounded in a transcendent mind that contains all the correct semantics of language.
- 4) So, there is a transcendent mind that contains all the correct semantics of language.

# FALSITY OF SEMANTIC INDETERMINISM

- Alexander Pruss, "Counterfactuals, Vagueness, and God," in Walls and Dougherty (eds.), *Two Dozen (or so) Arguments for God* (Oxford, 2018), pp. 76-88.

# **ANTHROPOLOGICA L ARGUMENTS**

# DESIRE

- 1) Natural desires (generally, if not always) imply there is something that can satisfy them.
- 2) We have a natural desire for things only God can satisfy.
- 3) So, probably, God exists.



# DESIRE

- C. S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity*.
- Robert Holyer, "The Argument from Desire," *Faith and Philosophy* 5/1 (1988), pp. 61-71.
- Sloan Lee, "As If Swallowing Life Itself: C. S. Lewis's Argument from Desire II," in Baggett, et al. (eds.), *C. S. Lewis as Philosopher: Truth, Goodness, and Beauty* (Liberty, 2017), pp. 327-346.
- Philip Tallon, "The Theistic Argument from Beauty and Play," in Walls and Dougherty (eds.), *Two Dozen (or so) Arguments for God* (Oxford, 2018), pp. 321-340.

# DESIRE: MODALIZED

- 1) Natural desires imply there can be something that satisfies them.
- 2) We have a natural desire for things only God can satisfy.
- 3) So, there can be a God.
- 4) If there can be a God, God exists.
- 5) So, God exists.

# DESIRE: MODALIZED

- Todd Buras and Michael Cantrell, "C. S. Lewis's Argument from Nostalgia: A New Argument from Desire," in Walls and Dougherty (eds.), *Two Dozen (or so) Arguments for God* (Oxford, 2018), pp. 304-320.

# **GOD AS MOTIVATIONAL CENTER**

- 1) If  $x$  is the motivational center of many peoples' lives, that is evidence that  $x$  can exist.
- 2) God is the motivational center of many peoples' lives.
- 3) So, that is evidence that God can exist.
- 4) Evidence that God can exist is evidence that God does exist.
- 5) So, that God is the motivational center of many peoples' lives is evidence that God exists.

# GOD AS MOTIVATIONAL CENTER

- Alexander Pruss, "The Ontological Argument and the Motivational Centers of Lives," *Religious Studies* 46/2 (2010), pp. 233-249.

# LOVE

- 1) Our richest and most profound displays of love strongly suggest that they are not just evolutionary byproducts of kin selection or reciprocal altruism.
- 2) If our richest and most profound displays of love strongly suggest that, then we're justified in thinking they're not just evolutionary byproducts of kin selection or reciprocal altruism.
- 3) If we're justified in thinking that, then we're justified in thinking there is a deeper, non-naturalistic source of love central to reality.
- 4) If there's a deeper, non-naturalistic source of love central to reality, it's probably God.
- 5) So, probably, God exists.

# LOVE

- Jerry Walls, "The God of Love and the Meaning of Life," in Walls and Dougherty (eds.), *Two Dozen (or so) Arguments for God* (Oxford, 2018), pp. 304-320.

# OBJECTIVE MEANING

- 1) Our lives are objectively meaningful.
- 2) Our lives can be objectively meaningful only if God exists.
- 3) So, God exists.



# OBJECTIVE MEANING

- William Lane Craig, "The Absurdity of Life Without God".

# MEANING AS ENDOWED

- 1) Our lives are objectively meaningful.
- 2) Something has meaning IFF it is endowed meaning by one or more personal agents with the requisite authority and control.
- 3) So, our lives are endowed meaning by one or more personal agents with the requisite authority and control.
- 4) The only personal agent with the requisite authority and control to endow our lives with objective meaning is God.
- 5) So, God exists.

**“And if all of this is outside our control, we do not have the requisite control to see to it that our lives are completely meaningful, through and through, from first to last. We can create islands of meaning in this sea of existence we’ve been given, but it is beyond the power of any of us to endow with meaning the entirety of life itself or the entirety of any of our own lives.”**

**- Thomas Morris**

# MEANING AS ENDOWED

- Thomas Morris, *Making Sense of it All* (Eerdmans, 1992), ch. 4.

# OBJECTIVE MEANING AS NARRATIVE

- 1) Our lives are objectively meaningful.
- 2) Our lives can be objectively meaningful only if they form a narrative.
- 3) Our lives can form a narrative only if there is a narrator/author of our lives.
- 4) So, there is a narrator/author of our lives.
- 5) If there is a narrator/author of our lives, it's God.
- 6) So, God exists.

# OBJECTIVE MEANING AS NARRATIVE

- Joshua Seachris, "The Meaning of Life as Narrative: A New Proposal for Interpreting Philosophy's 'Primary' Question," *Philo* 12 (2009), pp. 5-23.

# NATURALNESS OF BELIEF IN OBJECTIVE MEANING

**B = Belief that life has objective meaning is natural to us.**

**T = Theism**

**N = Naturalism**

- 1)  $\Pr(B|T) \gg \Pr(B|N)$ .**
- 2)  $\Pr(B|T) \gg \Pr(B|N)$ , then  $\Pr(T) > \Pr(N)$ .**
- 3) If  $\Pr(T) > \Pr(N)$ , then, probably, life has objective meaning.**
- 4) So, probably, life has objective meaning.**
- 5) If life has objective meaning, probably, God exists.**
- 6) So, probably, God exists.**

# NATURALNESS OF BELIEF IN OBJECTIVE MEANING

- Trent Dougherty, "Belief that Life has Meaning Confirms that Life has Meaning: A Bayesian Approach," in Seachris and Goetz (eds.), *God and Meaning: New Essays* (Bloomsbury, 2016), ch. 4.



# HAPPINESS AND THE AFTERLIFE

- 1) What makes life worth living is happiness.
- 2) If what makes life worth living is happiness, it is rational to forego happiness in this life for the sake of duty only if there's an afterlife where happiness and morality perfectly align.
- 3) It is rational to forego happiness in this life for the sake of moral duty.
- 4) So, there's an afterlife where happiness and morality perfectly align.
- 5) If there's an afterlife where happiness and morality perfectly align, then probably, God exists.
- 6) So, probably, God exists.

# HAPPINESS AND THE AFTERLIFE

- Stewart Goetz, *The Purpose of Life* (Continuum, 2012).

# POLITICAL AUTHORITY

- 1) Political Authority is justified.
- 2) If the justification of political authority is derived from a mundane source, it is probably either contractarian or consequentialist.
- 3) But neither contractarian theories nor consequentialist theories provide adequate justification for political authority.
- 4) So, the justification of political authority is probably not derived from a mundane source.
- 5) If the justification of political authority is not derived from a mundane source, it's probably derived from God.
- 6) So, probably, God exists.

# POLITICAL AUTHORITY

- **Jeremy Neill and Tyler McNabb, "By Whose Authority? A Political Argument for God's Existence," *European Journal for Philosophy of Religion* 11/2 (2019), pp. 163-189.**

# FREE WILL

- 1) We have free will.
- 2) If naturalism is true, we cannot have free will.
- 3) So, naturalism is false.
- 4) If theism is true, it is very likely that we would have free will.
- 5) So, that we have free will is strong evidence for theism over naturalism.

# FREE WILL

- C. Stephen Layman, *Letters to a Doubting Thomas: A Case for the Existence of God* (Oxford, 2007), ch. 6.

# PASCAL'S ANTHROPOLOGICAL ARGUMENT

- 1) Humans are morally bipolar.
- 2) The best explanation for why humans are morally bipolar is the Christian doctrines of the Fall and Original Sin.
- 3) So, it's reasonable to believe in the Christian doctrines of the Fall and Original Sin.
- 4) Christian doctrines of the Fall and Original Sin entail that Christianity is true.
- 5) So, it's reasonable to believe Christianity is true.

**“Man’s greatness and wretchedness are so evident that the true religion must necessarily teach us that there is in man some great principle of greatness and some great principle of wretchedness.”**

**- Pascal**



**"If only there were evil people somewhere insidiously committing evil deeds, and it were necessary only to separate them from the rest of us and destroy them. But the line dividing good and evil cuts through the heart of every human being. And who is willing to destroy a piece of his own heart? During the life of any heart this line keeps changing place; sometimes it is squeezed one way by exuberant evil and sometimes it shifts to allow enough space for good to flourish. One and the same human being is, at various stages, under various circumstances, a totally different human being. At times he is close to being a devil, at times to sainthood. But his name doesn't change, and to that name we ascribe the whole lot, good and evil."**

**- Aleksander Solzhenitsyn**

# PASCAL'S ANTHROPOLOGICAL ARGUMENT

- Pascal, *Pensées*.
- Douglas Groothuis, "Disposed Royalty: Pascal's Anthropological Argument," *Journal of the Evangelical Philosophical Society* 41/2 (1998), pp. 297-313.
- Robert Velarde, "Greatness and Wretchedness: The Usefulness of Pascal's Anthropological Argument in Apologetics," *Christian Research Journal* 27/2 (2004).
- Jonathan Threlfall, "The Imago Dei and Blaise Pascal's Abductive Anthropological Argument," *Philosophia Christi* 20/2 (2018), pp. 379-400.

# ***CONSENSUS GENTIUM***

**As evidence for God:**

- 1) If there is widespread belief in God, that is prima facie evidence that God exists.**
- 2) There is widespread belief in God.**
- 3) So, widespread belief in God is prima facie evidence that God exists.**

**As a defeater for atheism:**

- 4) Atheism is the denial that God exists.**
- 5) So, widespread belief in God is a defeater for atheism.**

# **CONSENSUS GENTIUM**

- Loren Meierding, "The Consensus Gentium Argument," *Faith and Philosophy* 15/3 (1998), pp. 271-297.
- Linda Zagzebski, "Epistemic Self-Trust and the Consensus Gentium Argument," in Clark & VanArragon (eds.), *Evidence and Religious Belief* (Oxford, 2011), pp. 22-36.
- Thomas Kelly, "Consensus Gentium: Reflections on the 'Common Consent' Argument for the Existence of God," in Clark & VanArragon (eds.), *Evidence and Religious Belief* (Oxford, 2011), pp. 135-156.

# **REHULT'S *CONSENSUS GENTIUM* ARGUMENT**

- 1) Belief that God exists is the majority view throughout human history.
- 2) A false belief is essentially the product of a cognitive malfunction of some sort.
- 3) It is more probable that a cognitive malfunction occurs a small number of times in a few people than a great many times in many different people.
- 4) So, belief that God exists is *prima facie* more likely to be true than belief that God does not exist.

# REHULT'S CONSENSUS GENTIUM ARGUMENT

- Sebastien Réhault, "Can Atheism Be Epistemically Responsible When So Many People Believe in God?" *European Journal for Philosophy of Religion* 7/1 (2015), pp. 181-198.

# **A MORE MODEST CONSENSUS GENTIUM**

- 1) If many of those whom I regard as epistemic authorities on God's existence believe in God, that is prima facie reason for me to believe God exists.
- 2) Many of those whom I regard as epistemic authorities on God's existence believe in God.
- 3) So, I have prima facie reason to believe God's existence.

# A MORE MODEST CONSENSUS GENTIUM

- Mark Dobrzeniecki, "Is the Fact that Other People Believe in God a Reason to Believe? Remarks on the *Consensus Gentium* Argument," *European Journal for Philosophy of Religion* 10/3 (2013), pp. 133-153.



# **PRAGMATIC ARGUMENTS**

# **PW: INFINITE EXPECTED VALUE**

- 1) If the expected value of belief in God is infinitely good but the expected value of disbelief in God is finitely good or infinitely bad, it is rational to believe in God.**
- 2) The expected value of belief in God is infinitely good but the expected value of disbelief in God is finitely good or infinitely bad.**
- 3) So, it is rational to believe in God.**

# **PW: GREATER EXPECTED VALUE**

- 1) If the expected value of belief in God is greater than the expected value of disbelief in God, it is rational to believe in God.**
- 2) The expected value of belief in God is greater than the expected value of disbelief in God.**
- 3) So, it is rational to believe in God.**

# PW: JACKSON AND ROGERS

- 1) You should maximize expected value.
- 2) Wagering on (i.e., believing or practicing) the most probable religion that posits an infinite afterlife maximizes expected value.
- 3) So, you should wager on the most probable religion that posits an infinite afterlife
- 4) Christianity is the most probable religion that posits an infinite afterlife.
- 5) So, you should wager on Christianity.

## PW: JACKSON AND ROGERS

- Liz Jackson and Andrew Rogers, "Salvaging Pascal's Wager," *Philosophia Christi* 21/1 (2019), pp. 59-84.

## PW: ROTA

- 1) If it is rational to think Christiaity has at least a 50% of being true, it is rational to commit to Christianity and irrational not to.
- 2) It is rational to think Christiaity has at least a 50% of being true.
- 3) So, it is rational to commit to Christianity and irrational not to.

## PW: ROTA

- Michael Rota, *Taking Pascal's Wager* (IVP, 2016).

# THE JAMESIAN WAGER

- 1) If belief in God is a genuine option and has more benefits than costs, belief in God is rationally permissible even if there is insufficient evidence for God's existence.
- 2) Belief in God is a genuine option and has more benefits than costs.
- 3) So, belief in God is rationally permissible even if there is insufficient evidence for God's existence.



# THE JAMESIAN WAGER

- Gathered from Jeff Jordan, *Pascal's Wager* (Oxford, 2006).

# **RATIONALITY OF DEVOTION TO GOD**

- P1. The greater the good, the more rational it is to hope for it, so long as it is believed possible.**
- P2: The more rational it is to hope for something, the more rational it is to devote your life to it.**
- P3. If S believes x is possible and x is the greatest good, it is maximally rational for S to hope for x, and so maximally rational for S to devote S's life to x, regardless of how probable x is.**
- 1) If God possibly exists, God is the greatest good.**
  - 2) I believe God possibly exists.**
  - 3) So, it is maximally rational for me to hope God exists, and so maximally rational for me to devote my life to God, regardless of how improbable God's existence is.**

# RATIONALITY OF DEVOTION TO GOD

- Richard Creel, "Agatheism: A Justification of the Rationality of Devotion to God," *Faith and philosophy* 10/1 (1993), pp. 33-48.

# FROM PERSONAL TO WORLD BENEFITS

- 1) If a religion's central teachings dramatically transform people and the world for the better, it is rational to commit to that religion.
- 2) Christianity's central teachings have, and continue to, dramatically transform people and the world for the better.
- 3) So, it is rational to commit to Christianity.

**“For decades, sociologist Rodney Stark has been writing about these historical transformations. Although he had been a professing agnostic 13 years ago, I wrote him an email in 2011, asking him where he was in his faith pilgrimage. He wrote back, informing me that he had come to identify himself as a Christian, observing the remarkable historical transformations inspired by those who had been changed by the message of Jesus: ‘I basically wrote myself into the Christian faith.’”**

**- Paul Copan**

# FROM PERSONAL TO WORLD BENEFITS

- Paul Copan and Thom Wolf, “Another Dimension of the Moral Argument: The Voice of Jesus and the Historical Fruits of the Christian Faith,” in Rasmussen and Vallier (ed.), *A New Theist Response to the New Atheists* (Routledge, 2020), ch. 10.
- Rodney Stark, *The Victory of Reason: How Christianity Led to Freedom, Capitalism, and Western Success* (Random House, 2006).
- Nick Spencer, *The Evolution of the West: How Christianity has Shaped our Values* (SPCK, 2016).

# **META- ARGUMENTS**

# TRANSCENDENTAL ARGUMENTS



# CUMULATIVE CASE ARGUMENTS

- **There's enough evidence for God's existence to make God's existence more likely than not.**
- **There's enough evidence for God's existence to make theism more likely than naturalism (or other meta-theories).**

# CUMULATIVE CREDENCE RAISER

- 1) The more independent arguments there are the  $p$  is true, the higher one's credence should be that  $p$  is possibly true.
- 2) There are more than enough arguments for God's existence to justify belief that God possibly exists.
- 3) If we're justified in believing God possibly exists, we're justified in believing God exists.
- 4) So, we're justified in believing God exists.

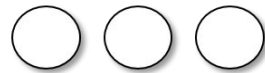
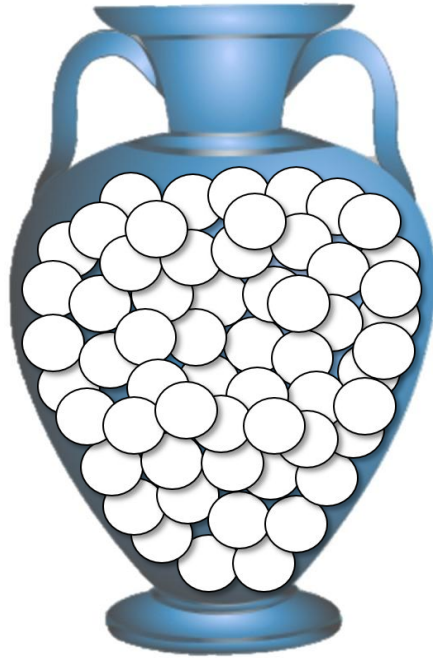
# CUMULATIVE CREDENCE RAISER

- Benjamin Arbour, “Dogmatic Open-Mindedness and Open-Minded Dogmatics,” in Trickett and Gilhooly (eds.), *Open-Mindedness in Philosophy of Religion* (Cambridge Scholars, 2019), ch. 5.

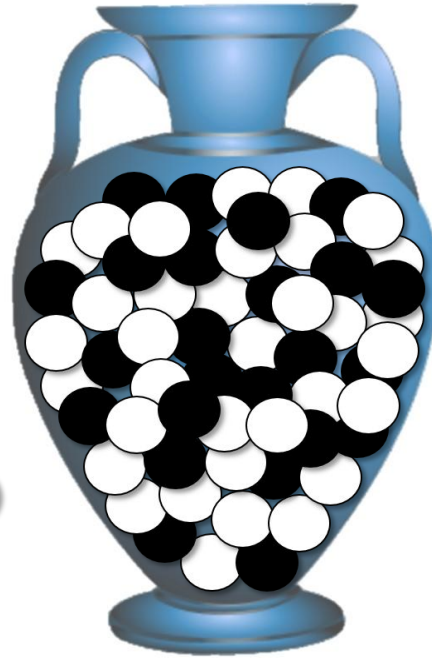
# THE POSSIBILITY OF A SOUND THEISTIC ARGUMENT

- 1) It is possible for there to be a sound theistic argument.
- 2) If it is possible for there to be a sound theistic argument,  
God exists.
- 3) So, God exists.

# ROYAL'S CASE



LR = 8



# THE ARGUMENT FROM SO MANY ARGUMENTS

## Argument Ratings

- **Bad:** Invalid or unsound
- **Weak:** Premises barely more plausible than not (LR: 1.1)
- **Strong:** Premises quite more probable than not (LR: 6)
- **Decent:** Somewhere between weak and strong (LR: 2)

# THEISTICALLY AMBIGUOUS UNIVERSE

- 1) The universe is theistically ambiguous.
- 2) The fact that the universe is theistically ambiguous is more likely if theism is true than if naturalism is true.
- 3) So, the fact that the universe is theistically ambiguous is evidence for theism over naturalism.